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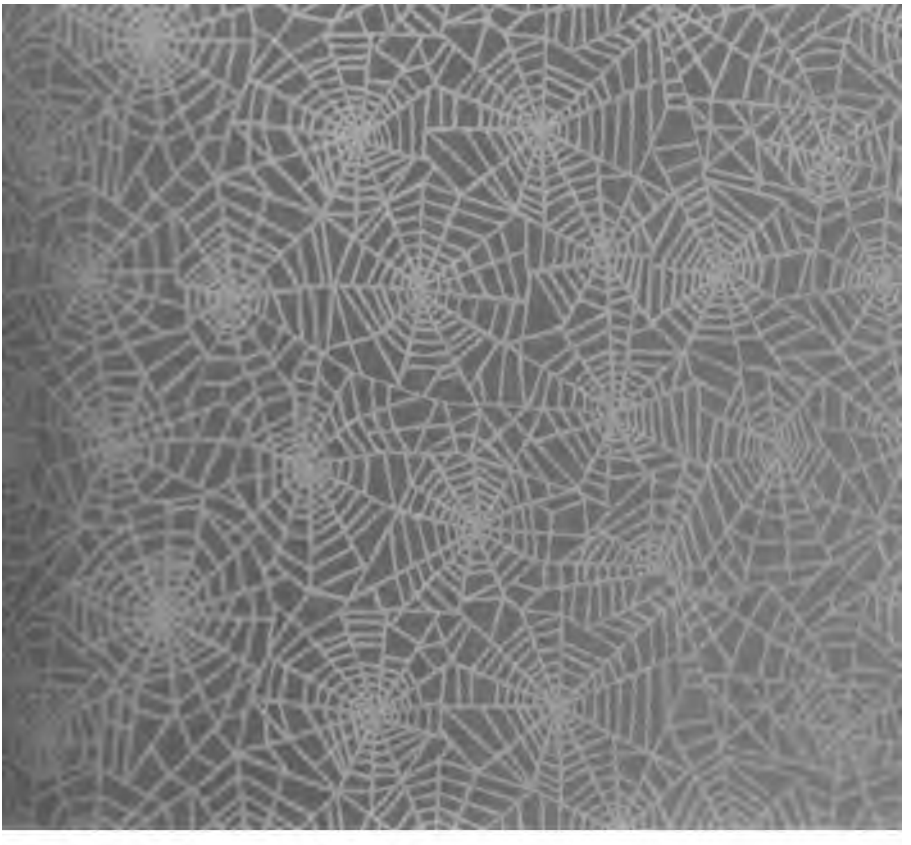

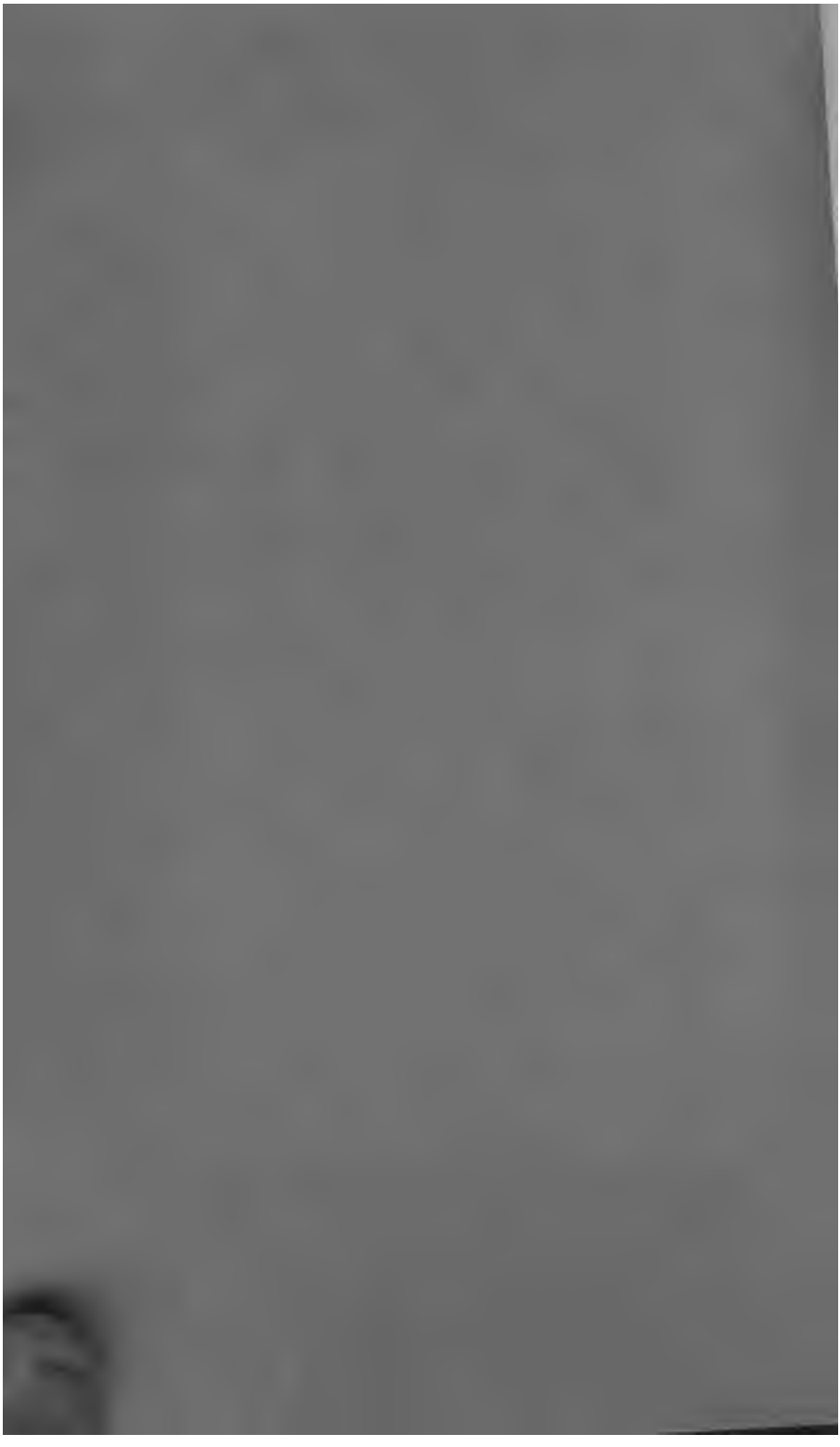

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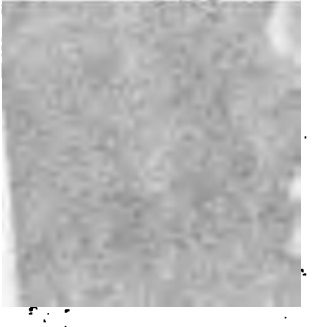
VOLUME XI.

THE SORROWS OF YOUNG WERTHER

ELECTIVE AFFINITIES

THE GOOD WOMEN

A TALE



The Sorrows of Young Werther

Elective Affinities

BY

J. W. von Goethe

Translated by

R. D. Boylan

Edited by Nathan Haskell Dole

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Preface

I HAVE carefully collected whatever I have been able to learn of the story of poor Werther, and here present it to you, knowing that you will thank me for it. To his spirit and character you cannot refuse your admiration and love: to his fate you will not deny your tears.

And thou, good soul, who sufferest the same distress as he endured once, draw comfort from his sorrows; and let this little book be thy friend, if, owing to fortune or through thine own fault, thou canst not find a dearer companion.

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The Sorrows of Young Werther

The Sorrows of Young Werther

BOOK I

MAY 4.

How happy I am that I am gone! My dear friend, what a thing is the heart of man! To leave you, from whom I have been inseparable, whom I love so dearly, and yet to feel happy! I know you will forgive me. Have not other attachments been specially appointed by fate to torment a head like mine? Poor Leonora! and yet I was not to blame. Was it my fault, that, whilst the peculiar charms of her sister afforded me an agreeable entertainment, a passion for me was engendered in her feeble heart? And yet am I wholly blameless? Did I not encourage her emotions? Did I not feel charmed at those truly genuine expressions of nature, which, though but little mirthful in reality, so often amused us? Did I not — but oh! what is man, that he dares so to accuse himself? My dear friend, I promise you I will improve; I will no longer, as has ever been my habit, continue to ruminate on every petty vexation which fortune may dispense; I will enjoy the present, and the past shall be for me the past. No doubt you are right, my best of friends, there would be far less suffering amongst mankind, if men — and God knows why they are so fashioned — did not employ their imaginations so assiduously in

recalling the memory of past sorrow, instead of bearing their present lot with equanimity.

Be kind enough to inform my mother that I shall attend to her business to the best of my ability, and shall give her the earliest information about it. I have seen my aunt, and find that she is very far from being the disagreeable person our friends allege her to be. She is a lively, cheerful woman, with the best of hearts. I explained to her my mother's wrongs with regard to that part of her portion which has been withheld from her. She told me the motives and reasons of her own conduct, and the terms on which she is willing to give up the whole, and to do more than we have asked. In short, I cannot write further upon this subject at present; only assure my mother that all will go on well. And I have again observed, my dear friend, in this trifling affair, that misunderstandings and neglect occasion more mischief in the world than even malice and wickedness. At all events, the two latter are of less frequent occurrence.

In other respects I am very well off here. Solitude in this terrestrial paradise is a genial balm to my mind, and the young spring cheers with its bounteous promises my oftentimes misgiving heart. Every tree, every bush, is full of flowers; and one might wish himself transformed into a butterfly, to float about in this ocean of perfume, and find his whole existence in it.

The town itself is disagreeable; but then, all around, you find an inexpressible beauty of nature. This induced the late Count M—— to lay out a garden on one of the sloping hills which here intersect each other with the most charming variety, and form the most lovely valleys. The garden is simple; and it is easy to perceive, even upon your first entrance, that the plan was not designed by a scientific gardener, but by a man who wished to give himself up here to the enjoyment of his own sensitive heart. Many a tear have

I already shed to the memory of its departed master in a summer-house which is now reduced to ruins, but was his favourite resort, and now is mine.' I shall soon be master of the place. The gardener has become attached to me within the last few days, and he will lose nothing thereby.

MAY 10.

'A wonderful serenity has taken possession of my entire soul, like these sweet mornings of spring which I enjoy with my whole heart. I am alone, and feel the charm of existence in this spot, which was created for the bliss of souls like mine. I am so happy, my dear friend, so absorbed in the exquisite sense of mere tranquil existence, that I neglect my talents. I should be incapable of drawing a single stroke at the present moment; and yet I feel that I never was a greater artist than now. When, while the lovely valley teems with vapour around me, and the meridian sun strikes the upper surface of the impenetrable foliage of my trees, and but a few stray gleams steal into the inner sanctuary, I throw myself down among the tall grass by the trickling stream; and, as I lie close to the earth, a thousand unknown plants are noticed by me: when I hear the buzz of the little world among the stalks, and grow familiar with the countless indescribable forms of the insects and flies, then I feel the presence of the Almighty, who formed us in his own image, and the breath of that universal love which bears and sustains us, as it floats around us in an eternity of bliss; and then, my friend, when darkness overspreads my eyes, and heaven and earth seem to dwell in my soul and absorb its power, like the form of a beloved mistress, — then I often think with longing, Oh, would I could describe these conceptions, could impress upon paper all that is living so full and warm within me, that it might be the mirror of my soul, as my soul is the

mirror of the infinite God! O my friend — but it is too much for my strength — I sink under the weight of the splendour of these visions!

MAY 12.

I know not whether some deceitful spirits haunt this spot, or whether it be the warm, celestial fancy in my own heart which makes everything around me seem like paradise. In front of the house is a fountain, — a fountain to which I am bound by a charm like Melusina and her sisters. Descending a gentle slope, you come to an arch, where, some twenty steps lower down, water of the clearest crystal gushes from the marble rock. The narrow wall which encloses it above, the tall trees which encircle the spot, and the coolness of the place itself, — everything imparts a pleasant but sublime impression. Not a day passes on which I do not spend an hour there. The young maidens come from the town to fetch water, — innocent and necessary employment, and formerly the occupation of the daughters of kings. As I take my rest there, the idea of the old patriarchal life is awakened around me. I see them, our old ancestors, how they formed their friendships and contracted alliances at the fountain-side; and I feel how fountains and streams were guarded by beneficent spirits. He who is a stranger to these sensations has never really enjoyed cool repose at the side of a fountain after the fatigue of a weary summer day.

MAY 13.

You ask if you shall send me books. My dear friend, I beseech you, for the love of God, relieve me from such a yoke! I need no more to be guided, agitated, heated. My heart ferments sufficiently of itself. I want strains to lull me, and I find them to perfection in my Homer. Often do I strive to allay the burning

fever of my blood; and you have never witnessed anything so unsteady, so uncertain, as my heart. But need I confess this to you, my dear friend, who have so often endured the anguish of witnessing my sudden transitions from sorrow to immoderate joy, and from sweet melancholy to violent passions? I treat my poor heart like a sick child, and gratify its every fancy. Do not mention this again: there are people who would censure me for it.

MAY 15.

The common people of the place know me already, and love me, particularly the children. When at first I associated with them, and inquired in a friendly tone about their various trifles, some fancied that I wished to ridicule them, and turned from me in exceeding ill-humour. I did not allow that circumstance to grieve me: I only felt most keenly what I have often before observed. Persons who can claim a certain rank keep themselves coldly aloof from the common people, as though they feared to lose their importance by the contact; whilst wanton idlers, and such as are prone to bad joking, affect to descend to their level, only to make the poor people feel their impertinence all the more keenly.

I know very well that we are not all equal, nor can be so; but it is my opinion that he who avoids the common people, in order not to lose their respect, is as much to blame as a coward who hides himself from his enemy because he fears defeat.

The other day I went to the fountain, and found a young servant-girl, who had set her pitcher on the lowest step, and looked around to see if one of her companions was approaching to place it on her head. I ran down, and looked at her. "Shall I help you, pretty lass?" said I. She blushed deeply. "Oh, sir!" she exclaimed. "No ceremony!" I replied. She ad-

justed her head-gear, and I helped her. She thanked me, and ascended the steps.

MAY 17.

I have made all sorts of acquaintances, but have as yet found no society. I know not what attraction I possess for the people, so many of them like me, and attach themselves to me; and then I feel sorry when the road we pursue together goes only a short distance. If you inquire what the people are like here, I must answer, "The same as everywhere." The human race is but a monotonous affair. Most of them labour the greater part of their time for mere subsistence; and the scanty portion of freedom which remains to them so troubles them that they use every exertion to get rid of it. Oh, the destiny of man!

But they are a right good sort of people. If I occasionally forget myself, and take part in the innocent pleasures which are not yet forbidden to the peasantry, and enjoy myself, for instance, with genuine freedom and sincerity, round a well-covered table, or arrange an excursion or a dance opportunely, and so forth, all this produces a good effect upon my disposition; only I must forget that there lie dormant within me so many other qualities which moulder uselessly, and which I am obliged to keep carefully concealed. Ah! this thought affects my spirits fearfully. And yet to be misunderstood is the fate of the like of us.

Alas, that the friend of my youth is gone! Alas, that I ever knew her! I might say to myself, "You are a dreamer to seek what is not to be found here below." But she has been mine. I have possessed that heart, that noble soul, in whose presence I seemed to be more than I really was, because I was all that I could be. Good heavens! did then a single power of my soul remain unexercised? In her presence could I

not display, to its full extent, that mysterious feeling with which my heart embraces nature? Was not our intercourse a perpetual web of the finest emotions, of the keenest wit, the varieties of which, even in their very eccentricity, bore the stamp of genius? Alas! the few years by which she was my senior brought her to the grave before me. Never can I forget her firm mind or her heavenly patience.

A few days ago I met a certain young V——, a frank, open fellow, with a most pleasing countenance. He has just left the university, does not deem himself overwise, but believes he knows more than other people. He has worked hard, as I can perceive from many circumstances, and, in short, possesses a large stock of information. When he heard that I am drawing a good deal, and that I know Greek (two wonderful things for this part of the country), he came to see me, and displayed his whole store of learning, from Batteaux to Wood, from De Piles to Winkelmann: he assured me he had read through the first part of Sultzer's theory, and also possessed a manuscript of Heyne's work on the study of the antique. I allowed it all to pass.

I have become acquainted, also, with a very worthy person, the district judge, a frank and open-hearted man. I am told it is a most delightful thing to see him in the midst of his children, of whom he has nine. His eldest daughter especially is highly spoken of. He has invited me to go and see him, and I intend to do so on the first opportunity. He lives at one of the royal hunting-lodges, which can be reached from here in an hour and a half by walking, and which he obtained leave to inhabit after the loss of his wife, as it is so painful to him to reside in town and at the court.

There have also come in my way a few other originals of a questionable sort, who are in all respects un-

desirable, and most intolerable in their demonstrations of friendship. Good-bye. This letter will please you: it is quite historical.

MAY 22.

That the life of man is but a dream, many a man has surmised heretofore; and I, too, am everywhere pursued by this feeling. When I consider the narrow limits within which our active and inquiring faculties are confined; when I see how all our energies are wasted in providing for mere necessities, which again have no further end than to prolong a wretched existence; and then that all our satisfaction concerning certain subjects of investigation ends in nothing better than a passive resignation, whilst we amuse ourselves painting our prison-walls with bright figures and brilliant landscapes, — when I consider all this, Wilhelm, I am silent. I examine my own being, and find there a world, but a world rather of imagination and dim desires, than of distinctness and living power. Then everything swims before my senses, and I smile and dream while pursuing my way through the world.

All learned professors and doctors are agreed that children do not comprehend the cause of their desires; but that the grown-up should wander about this earth like children, without knowing whence they come, or whither they go, influenced as little by fixed motives, but guided like them by biscuits, sugar-plums, and the rod, — this is what nobody is willing to acknowledge; and yet I think it is palpable.

I know what you will say in reply; for I am ready to admit that they are happiest, who, like children, amuse themselves with their playthings, dress and undress their dolls, and attentively watch the cupboard, where mamma has locked up her sweet things, and, when at last they get a delicious morsel, eat it greedily, and exclaim, "More!" These are certainly happy be-

ings; but others also are objects of envy, who dignify their paltry employments, and sometimes even their passions, with pompous titles, representing them to mankind as gigantic achievements performed for their welfare and glory. But the man who humbly acknowledges the vanity of all this, who observes with what pleasure the thriving citizen converts his little garden into a paradise, and how patiently even the poor man pursues his weary way under his burden, and how all wish equally to behold the light of the sun a little longer, — yes, such a man is at peace, and creates his own world within himself; and he is also happy, because he is a man. And then, however limited his sphere, he still preserves in his bosom the sweet feeling of liberty, and knows that he can quit his prison whenever he likes.

MAY 26.

You know of old my ways of settling anywhere, of selecting a little cottage in some cosy spot, and of putting up in it with every inconvenience. Here, too, I have discovered such a snug, comfortable place, which possesses peculiar charms for me.

About a league from the town is a place called Walheim.[1] It is delightfully situated on the side of a hill; and, by proceeding along one of the footpaths which lead out of the village, you can have a view of the whole valley. A good old woman lives there, who keeps a small inn. She sells wine, beer, and coffee, and is cheerful and pleasant notwithstanding her age. The chief charm of this spot consists in two linden-trees, spreading their enormous branches over the little green before the church, which is entirely surrounded by peasants' cottages, barns, and homesteads.

[1] The reader need not take the trouble to look for the place thus designated. We have found it necessary to change the names given in the original.

I have seldom seen a place so retired and peaceable; and there often have my table and chair brought out from the little inn, and drink my coffee there, and read my Homer. Accident brought me to the spot one fine afternoon, and I found it perfectly deserted. Everybody was in the fields except a little boy about four years of age, who was sitting on the ground, and held between his knees a child about six months old: he pressed it to his bosom with both arms, which thus formed a sort of arm-chair; and, notwithstanding the liveliness which sparkled in its black eyes, it remained perfectly still. The sight charmed me. I sat down upon a plough opposite, and sketched with great delight this little picture of brotherly tenderness. I added the neighbouring hedge, the barn-door, and some broken cart-wheels, just as they happened to lie; and I found in about an hour that I had made a very correct and interesting drawing, without putting in the slightest thing of my own. This confirmed me in my resolution of adhering, for the future, entirely to nature. She alone is inexhaustible, and capable of forming the greatest masters. Much may be alleged in favour of rules, as much may be likewise advanced in favour of the laws of society: an artist formed upon them will never produce anything absolutely bad or disgusting; as a man who observes the laws, and obeys decorum, can never be an absolutely intolerable neighbour, nor a decided villain: but yet, say what you will of rules, they destroy the genuine feeling of nature, as well as its true expression. Do not tell me "that this is too hard, that they only restrain and prune superfluous branches, etc." My good friend, I will illustrate this by an analogy. These things resemble love. A warm-hearted youth becomes strongly attached to a maiden: he spends every hour of the day in her company, wears out his health, and lavishes his fortune, to afford continual proof that he is wholly devoted to her. Then

comes a man of the world, a man of place and respectability, and addresses him thus: "My good young friend, love is natural; but you must love within bounds. Divide your time: devote a portion to business, and give the hours of recreation to your mistress. Calculate your fortune; and out of the superfluity you may make her a present, only not too often, — on her birthday, and such occasions." Pursuing this advice, he may become a useful member of society, and I should advise every prince to give him an appointment; but it is all up with his love, and with his genius if he be an artist. O my friend! why is it that the torrent of genius so seldom bursts forth, so seldom rolls in full-flowing stream, overwhelming your astounded soul? Because, on either side of this stream, cold and respectable persons have taken up their abodes, and, forsooth, their summer-houses and tulip-beds would suffer from the torrent; wherefore they dig trenches, and raise embankments betimes, in order to avert the impending danger.

MAY 27.

I find I have fallen into raptures, declamation, and similes, and have forgotten, in consequence, to tell you what became of the children. Absorbed in my artistic contemplations, which I briefly described in my letter of yesterday, I continued sitting on the plough for two hours. Toward evening a young woman, with a basket on her arm, came running toward the children, who had not moved all that time. She exclaimed from a distance, "You are a good boy, Philip!" She gave me greeting: I returned it, rose, and approached her. I inquired if she were the mother of those pretty children. "Yes," she said; and, giving the eldest a piece of bread, she took the little one in her arms and kissed it with a mother's tenderness. "I left my child in Philip's care," she said, "whilst I went into the town

with my eldest boy to buy some wheaten bread, some sugar, and an earthen pot." I saw the various articles in the basket, from which the cover had fallen. "I shall make some broth to-night for my little Hans (which was the name of the youngest): that wild fellow, the big one, broke my pot yesterday, whilst he was scrambling with Philip for what remained of the contents." I inquired for the eldest; and she had scarcely time to tell me that he was driving a couple of geese home from the meadow, when he ran up, and handed Philip an osier-twig. I talked a little longer with the woman, and found that she was the daughter of the schoolmaster, and that her husband was gone on a journey into Switzerland for some money a relation had left him. "They wanted to cheat him," she said, "and would not answer his letters; so he is gone there himself. I hope he has met with no accident, as I have heard nothing of him since his departure." I left the woman with regret, giving each of the children a kreutzer, with an additional one for the youngest, to buy some wheaten bread for his broth when she went to town next; and so we parted.

I assure you, my dear friend, when my thoughts are all in tumult, the sight of such a creature as this tranquillises my disturbed mind. She moves in a happy thoughtlessness within the confined circle of her existence; she supplies her wants from day to day; and, when she sees the leaves fall, they raise no other idea in her mind than that winter is approaching.

Since that time I have gone out there frequently. The children have become quite familiar with me; and each gets a lump of sugar when I drink my coffee, and they share my milk and bread and butter in the evening. They always receive their kreutzer on Sundays, for the good woman has orders to give it to them when I do not go there after evening service.

They are quite at home with me, tell me everything;

and I am particularly amused with observing their tempers, and the simplicity of their behaviour, when some of the other village children are assembled with them.

It has given me a deal of trouble to satisfy the anxiety of the mother, lest (as she says) "they should inconvenience the gentleman."

MAY 30.

What I have lately said of painting is equally true with respect to poetry. It is only necessary for us to know what is really excellent, and venture to give it expression; and that is saying much in few words. To-day I have had a scene, which, if literally related, would make the most beautiful idyl in the world. But why should I talk of poetry and scenes and idyls? Can we never take pleasure in nature without having recourse to art?

If you expect anything grand or magnificent from this introduction, you will be sadly mistaken. It relates merely to a peasant-lad, who has excited in me the warmest interest. As usual, I shall tell my story badly; and you, as usual, will think me extravagant. It is Walheim once more — always Walheim — which produces these wonderful phenomena.

A party had assembled outside the house under the linden-trees, to drink coffee. The company did not exactly please me; and, under one pretext or another, I lingered behind.

A peasant came from an adjoining house, and set to work arranging some part of the same plough which I had lately sketched. His appearance pleased me; and I spoke to him, inquired about his circumstances, made his acquaintance, and, as is my wont with persons of that class, was soon admitted into his confidence. He said he was in the service of a young widow, who set great store by him. He spoke so much of his mistress,

and praised her so extravagantly, that I could soon see he was desperately in love with her. "She is no longer young," he said: "and she was treated so badly by her former husband that she does not mean to marry again." From his account it was so evident what incomparable charms she possessed for him, and how ardently he wished she would select him to extinguish the recollection of her first husband's misconduct, that I should have to repeat his own words in order to describe the depth of the poor fellow's attachment, truth, and devotion. It would, in fact, require the gifts of a great poet to convey the expression of his features, the harmony of his voice, and the heavenly fire of his eye. No words can portray the tenderness of his every movement and of every feature: no effort of mine could do justice to the scene. His alarm lest I should misconceive his position with regard to his mistress, or question the propriety of her conduct, touched me particularly. The charming manner with which he described her form and person, which, without possessing the graces of youth, won and attached him to her, is inexpressible, and must be left to the imagination. I have never in my life witnessed or fancied or conceived the possibility of such intense devotion, such ardent affections, united with so much purity. Do not blame me if I say that the recollection of this innocence and truth is deeply impressed upon my very soul; that this picture of fidelity and tenderness haunts me everywhere; and that my own heart, as though enkindled by the flame, glows and burns within me.

I mean now to try and see her as soon as I can: or perhaps, on second thoughts, I had better not; it is better I should behold her through the eyes of her lover. To my sight, perhaps, she would not appear as she now stands before me; and why should I destroy so sweet a picture?

the inclination
to love precedes
the fact

JUNE 16.

"Why do I not write to you?" You lay claim to learning, and ask such a question. You should have guessed that I am well — that is to say — in a word, I have made an acquaintance who has won my heart: I have — I know not.

To give you a regular account of the manner in which I have become acquainted with the most amiable of women would be a difficult task. I am a happy and contented mortal, but a poor historian.

An angel! Nonsense! Everybody so describes his mistress; and yet I find it impossible to tell you how perfect she is, or why she is so perfect: suffice it to say she has captivated all my senses.

So much simplicity with so much understanding — so mild, and yet so resolute — a mind so placid, and a life so active.

But all this is ugly balderdash, which expresses not a single character nor feature. Some other time — but no, not some other time, now, this very instant, will I tell you all about it. Now or never. Well, between ourselves, since I commenced my letter, I have been three times on the point of throwing down my pen, of ordering my horse, and riding out. And yet I vowed this morning that I would not ride to-day, and yet every moment I am rushing to the window to see how high the sun is.

I could not restrain myself — go to her I must. I have just returned, Wilhelm; and whilst I am taking supper I will write to you. What a delight it was for my soul to see her in the midst of her dear, beautiful children, — eight brothers and sisters!

But, if I proceed thus, you will be no wiser at the end of my letter than you were at the beginning. Attend, then, and I will compel myself to give you the details.

I mentioned to you the other day that I had become acquainted with S——, the district judge, and that he had invited me to go and visit him in his retirement, or rather in his little kingdom. But I neglected going, and perhaps should never have gone, if chance had not discovered to me the treasure which lay concealed in that retired spot. Some of our young people had proposed giving a ball in the country, at which I consented to be present. I offered my hand for the evening to a pretty and agreeable, but rather commonplace, sort of girl from the immediate neighbourhood; and it was agreed that I should engage a carriage, and call upon Charlotte, with my partner and her aunt, to convey them to the ball. My companion informed me, as we drove along through the park to the hunting-lodge, that I should make the acquaintance of a very charming young lady. "Take care," added the aunt, "that you do not lose your heart." "Why?" said I. "Because she is already engaged to a very worthy man," she replied, "who is gone to settle his affairs upon the death of his father, and will succeed to a very considerable inheritance." This information possessed no interest for me. When we arrived at the gate, the sun was setting behind the tops of the mountains. The atmosphere was heavy; and the ladies expressed their fears of an approaching storm, as masses of low black clouds were gathering in the horizon. I relieved their anxieties by pretending to be weather-wise, although I myself had some apprehensions lest our pleasure should be interrupted.

I alighted; and a maid came to the door, and requested us to wait a moment for her mistress. I walked across the court to a well-built house, and, ascending the flight of steps in front, opened the door, and saw before me the most charming spectacle I had ever witnessed. Six children, from eleven to two years old, were running about the hall, and surround-

ing a lady of middle height, with a lovely figure, dressed in a robe of simple white, trimmed with pink ribbons. She was holding a rye loaf in her hand, and was cutting slices for the little ones all around, in proportion to their age and appetite. She performed her task in a graceful and affectionate manner; each claimant awaiting his turn with outstretched hands, and boisterously shouting his thanks. Some of them ran away at once, to enjoy their evening meal; whilst others, of a gentler disposition, retired to the courtyard to see the strangers, and to survey the carriage in which their Charlotte was to drive away. "Pray forgive me for giving you the trouble to come for me, and for keeping the ladies waiting: but dressing, and arranging some household duties before I leave, had made me forget my children's supper; and they do not like to take it from any one but me." I uttered some indifferent compliment: but my whole soul was absorbed by her air, her voice, her manner; and I had scarcely recovered myself when she ran into her room to fetch her gloves and fan. The young ones threw inquiring glances at me from a distance; whilst I approached the youngest, a most delicious little creature. He drew back; and Charlotte, entering at the very moment, said, "Louis, shake hands with your cousin." The little fellow obeyed willingly; and I could not resist giving him a hearty kiss, notwithstanding his rather dirty face. "Cousin," said I to Charlotte, as I handed her down, "do you think I deserve the happiness of being related to you?" She replied, with a ready smile, "Oh! I have such a number of cousins, that I should be sorry if you were the most undeserving of them." In taking leave, she desired her next sister, Sophy, a girl about eleven years old, to take great care of the children, and to say good-bye to papa for her when he came home from his ride. She enjoined to the little ones to obey their

sister Sophy as they would herself, upon which some promised that they would; but a little fair-haired girl, about six years old, looked discontented, and said, "But Sophy is not you, Charlotte; and we like you best." The two eldest boys had clambered up the carriage; and, at my request, she permitted them to accompany us a little way through the forest, upon their promising to sit very still, and hold fast.

We were hardly seated, and the ladies had scarcely exchanged compliments, making the usual remarks upon each other's dress, and upon the company they expected to meet, when Charlotte stopped the carriage, and made her brothers get down. They insisted upon kissing her hands once more; which the eldest did with all the tenderness of a youth of fifteen, but the other in a lighter and more careless manner. She desired them again to give her love to the children, and we drove off.

The aunt inquired of Charlotte whether she had finished the book she had last sent her. "No," said Charlotte; "I did not like it: you can have it again. And the one before was not much better." I was surprised, upon asking the title, to hear that it was[1] ——. I found penetration and character in everything she said: every expression seemed to brighten her features with new charms, — with new rays of genius, — which unfolded by degrees, as she felt herself understood.

"When I was younger," she observed, "I loved nothing so much as romances. Nothing could equal my delight when, on some holiday, I could settle down quietly in a corner, and enter with my whole heart and soul into the joys or sorrows of some fictitious Leonora. I do not deny that they even possess

[1] We feel obliged to suppress the passage in the letter, to prevent any one from feeling aggrieved; although no author need pay much attention to the opinion of a mere girl, or that of an unsteady young man.

some charms for me yet. But I read so seldom, that I prefer books suited exactly to my taste. And I like those authors best whose scenes describe my own situation in life, — and the friends who are about me, whose stories touch me with interest, from resembling my own homely existence, — which, without being absolutely paradise, is, on the whole, a source of indescribable happiness."

I endeavoured to conceal the emotion which these words occasioned, but it was of slight avail; for, when she had expressed so truly her opinion of "The Vicar of Wakefield," and of other works, the names of which I omit,[1] I could no longer contain myself, but gave full utterance to what I thought of it: and it was not until Charlotte had addressed herself to the two other ladies, that I remembered their presence, and observed them sitting mute with astonishment. The aunt looked at me several times with an air of raillery, which, however, I did not at all mind.

We talked of the pleasures of dancing. "If it is a fault to love it," said Charlotte, "I am ready to confess that I prize it above all other amusements. If anything disturbs me, I go to the piano, play an air to which I have danced, and all goes right again directly."

You, who know me, can fancy how steadfastly I gazed upon her rich dark eyes during these remarks, how my very soul gloated over her warm lips and fresh, glowing cheeks, how I became quite lost in the delightful meaning of her words, so much so, that I scarcely heard the actual expressions. In short, I alighted from the carriage like a person in a dream, and was so lost to the dim world around me, that I scarcely heard the music which resounded from the illuminated ballroom.

[1] Though the names are omitted, yet the authors mentioned deserve Charlotte's approbation, and will feel it in their hearts when they read this passage. It concerns no other person.

The two Messrs. Andran and a certain N. N. (I cannot trouble myself with the names), who were the aunt's and Charlotte's partners, received us at the carriage-door, and took possession of their ladies, whilst I followed with mine.

We commenced with a minuet. I led out one lady after another, and precisely those who were the most disagreeable could not bring themselves to leave off. Charlotte and her partner began an English country dance, and you must imagine my delight when it was their turn to dance the figure with us. You should see Charlotte dance. She dances with her whole heart and soul: her figure is all harmony, elegance, and grace, as if she were conscious of nothing else, and had no other thought or feeling; and, doubtless, for the moment, every other sensation is extinct.

She was engaged for the second country dance, but promised me the third, and assured me, with the most agreeable freedom, that she was very fond of waltzing. "It is the custom here," she said, "for the previous partners to waltz together; but my partner is an indifferent waltzer, and will feel delighted if I save him the trouble. Your partner is not allowed to waltz, and, indeed, is equally incapable: but I observed during the country dance that you waltz well; so, if you will waltz with me, I beg you would propose it to my partner, and I will propose it to yours." We agreed, and it was arranged that our partners should mutually entertain each other.

We set off, and, at first, delighted ourselves with the usual graceful motions of the arms. With what grace, with what ease, she moved! When the waltz commenced, and the dancers whirled around each other in the giddy maze, there was some confusion, owing to the incapacity of some of the dancers. We judiciously remained still, allowing the others to weary themselves; and, when the awkward dancers had with-

drawn, we joined in, and kept it up famously together with one other couple, — Andran and his partner. Never did I dance more lightly. I felt myself more than mortal, holding this loveliest of creatures in my arms, flying with her as rapidly as the wind, till I lost sight of every other object; and O Wilhelm, I vowed at that moment, that a maiden whom I loved, or for whom I felt the slightest attachment, never, never should waltz with any one else but with me, if I went to perdition for it! — you will understand this.

We took a few turns in the room to recover our breath. Charlotte sat down, and felt refreshed by partaking of some oranges which I had had secured, — the only ones that had been left; but at every slice which, from politeness, she offered to her neighbours, I felt as though a dagger went through my heart.

We were the second couple in the third country dance. As we were going down (and Heaven knows with what ecstasy I gazed at her arms and eyes, beaming with the sweetest feeling of pure and genuine enjoyment), we passed a lady whom I had noticed for her charming expression of countenance; although she was no longer young. She looked at Charlotte with a smile, then, holding up her finger in a threatening attitude, repeated twice in a very significant tone of voice the name of "Albert."

"Who is Albert," said I to Charlotte, "if it is not impertinent to ask?" She was about to answer, when we were obliged to separate, in order to execute a figure in the dance; and, as we crossed over again in front of each other, I perceived she looked somewhat pensive. "Why need I conceal it from you?" she said, as she gave me her hand for the promenade. "Albert is a worthy man, to whom I am engaged." Now, there was nothing new to me in this (for the girls had told me of it on the way); but it was so far new that I had not thought of it in connection with

her whom, in so short a time, I had learned to prize so highly. Enough, I became confused, got out in the figure, and occasioned general confusion; so that it required all Charlotte's presence of mind to set me right by pulling and pushing me into my proper place.

The dance was not yet finished when the lightning which had for some time been seen in the horizon, and which I had asserted to proceed entirely from heat, grew more violent; and the thunder was heard above the music. When any distress or terror surprises us in the midst of our amusements, it naturally makes a deeper impression than at other times, either because the contrast makes us more keenly susceptible, or rather perhaps because our senses are then more open to impressions, and the shock is consequently stronger. To this cause I must ascribe the fright and shrieks of the ladies. One sagaciously sat down in a corner with her back to the window, and held her fingers to her ears; a second knelt down before her, and hid her face in her lap; a third threw herself between them, and embraced her sister with a thousand tears; some insisted on going home; others, unconscious of their actions, wanted sufficient presence of mind to repress the impertinence of their young partners, who sought to direct to themselves those sighs which the lips of our agitated beauties intended for heaven. Some of the gentlemen had gone down-stairs to smoke a quiet cigar, and the rest of the company gladly embraced a happy suggestion of the hostess to retire into another room which was provided with shutters and curtains. We had hardly got there, when Charlotte placed the chairs in a circle; and, when the company had sat down in compliance with her request, she forthwith proposed a round game.

I noticed some of the company prepare their mouths and draw themselves up at the prospect of some agree-

able forfeit. "Let us play at counting," said Charlotte. "Now, pay attention: I shall go round the circle from right to left; and each person is to count, one after the other, the number that comes to him, and must count fast; whoever stops or mistakes is to have a box on the ear, and so on, till we have counted a thousand." It was delightful to see the fun. She went round the circle with upraised arm. "One," said the first; "two," the second; "three," the third; and so on, till Charlotte went faster and faster. One made a mistake, instantly a box on the ear; and, amid the laughter that ensued, came another box; and so on, faster and faster. I myself came in for two. I fancied they were harder than the rest, and felt quite delighted. A general laughter and confusion put an end to the game long before we had counted as far as a thousand. The party broke up into little separate knots: the storm had ceased, and I followed Charlotte into the ballroom. On the way she said, "The game banished their fears of the storm." I could make no reply. "I myself," she continued, "was as much frightened as any of them; but by affecting courage, to keep up the spirits of the others, I forgot my apprehensions." We went to the window. It was still thundering at a distance: a soft rain was pouring down over the country, and filled the air around us with delicious odours. Charlotte leaned forward on her arm; her eyes wandered over the scene; she raised them to the sky, and then turned them upon me; they were moistened with tears; she placed her hand on mine and said, "Klopstock!" at once I remembered the magnificent ode which was in her thoughts: I felt oppressed with the weight of my sensations, and sank under them. It was more than I could bear. I bent over her hand, kissed it in a stream of delicious tears, and again looked up to her eyes. Divine Klopstock! why didst thou not see thy apotheosis in those eyes? And thy

name, so often profaned, would that I never heard it repeated!

JUNE 19.

I no longer remember where I stopped in my narrative: I only know it was two in the morning when I went to bed; and if you had been with me, that I might have talked instead of writing to you, I should, in all probability, have kept you up till daylight.

I think I have not yet related what happened as we rode home from the ball, nor have I time to tell you now. It was a most magnificent sunrise: the whole country was refreshed, and the rain fell drop by drop from the trees in the forest. Our companions were asleep. Charlotte asked me if I did not wish to sleep also, and begged of me not to make any ceremony on her account. Looking steadfastly at her, I answered, "As long as I see those eyes open, there is no fear of my falling asleep." We both continued awake till we reached her door. The maid opened it softly, and assured her, in answer to her inquiries, that her father and the children were well, and still sleeping. I left her, asking permission to visit her in the course of the day. She consented, and I went, and, since that time, sun, moon, and stars may pursue their course: I know not whether it is day or night; the whole world is nothing to me.

JUNE 21.

My days are as happy as those reserved by God for his elect; and, whatever be my fate hereafter, I can never say that I have not tasted joy, — the purest joy of life. You know Walheim. I am now completely settled there. In that spot I am only half a league from Charlotte; and there I enjoy myself, and taste all the pleasure which can fall to the lot of man.

Little did I imagine, when I selected Walheim for

my pedestrian excursions, that all heaven lay so near it. How often in my wanderings from the hillside or from the meadows across the river, have I beheld this hunting-lodge, which now contains within it all the joy of my heart!

I have often, my dear Wilhelm, reflected on the eagerness men feel to wander and make new discoveries, and upon that secret impulse which afterward inclines them to return to their narrow circle, conform to the laws of custom, and embarrass themselves no longer with what passes around them.

It is so strange how, when I came here first, and gazed upon that lovely valley from the hillside, I felt charmed with the entire scene surrounding me. The little wood opposite — how delightful to sit under its shade! How fine the view from that point of rock! Then, that delightful chain of hills, and the exquisite valleys at their feet! Could I but wander and lose myself amongst them! I went, and returned without finding what I wished. Distance, my friend, is like futurity. A dim vastness is spread before our souls: the perceptions of our mind are as obscure as those of our vision; and we desire earnestly to surrender up our whole being, that it may be filled with the complete and perfect bliss of one glorious emotion. But alas! when we have attained our object, when the distant *there* becomes the present *here*, all is changed: we are as poor and circumscribed as ever, and our souls still languish for unattainable happiness.

So does the restless traveller pant for his native soil, and find in his own cottage, in the arms of his wife, in the affections of his children, and in the labour necessary for their support, that happiness which he had sought in vain through the wide world.

When, in the morning at sunrise, I go out to Walheim, and with my own hands gather in the garden the pease which are to serve for my dinner, when I sit

down to shell them, and read my Homer during the intervals, and then, selecting a saucepan from the kitchen, fetch my own butter, put my mess on the fire, cover it up, and sit down to stir it as occasion requires, I figure to myself the illustrious suitors of Penelope, killing, dressing, and preparing their own oxen and swine. Nothing fills me with a more pure and genuine sense of happiness than those traits of patriarchal life which, thank Heaven! I can imitate without affectation. Happy is it, indeed, for me that my heart is capable of feeling the same simple and innocent pleasure as the peasant whose table is covered with food of his own rearing, and who not only enjoys his meal, but remembers with delight the happy days and sunny mornings when he planted it, the soft evenings when he watered it, and the pleasure he experienced in watching its daily growth.

JUNE 29.

The day before yesterday, the physician came from the town to pay a visit to the judge. He found me on the floor playing with Charlotte's children. Some of them were scrambling over me, and others romped with me; and, as I caught and tickled them, they made a great noise. The doctor is a formal sort of personage: he adjusts the plaits of his ruffles, and continually settles his frill whilst he is talking to you; and he thought my conduct beneath the dignity of a sensible man. I could perceive this by his countenance. But I did not suffer myself to be disturbed. I allowed him to continue his wise conversation, whilst I rebuilt the children's card houses for them as fast as they threw them down. He went about the town afterward, complaining that the judge's children were spoiled enough before, but that now Werther was completely ruining them.

Yes, my dear Wilhelm, nothing on this earth affects

my heart so much as children. When I look on at their doings; when I mark in the little creatures the seeds of all those virtues and qualities which they will one day find so indispensable; when I behold in the obstinate all the future firmness and constancy of a noble character; in the capricious, that levity and gaiety of temper which will carry them lightly over the dangers and troubles of life, their whole nature simple and unpolluted, — then I call to mind the golden words of the Great Teacher of mankind, "Unless ye become like one of these!" And now, my friend, these children, who are our equals, whom we ought to consider as our models, we treat them as though they were our subjects. They are allowed no will of their own. And have we, then, none ourselves? Whence comes our exclusive right? Is it because we are older and more experienced? Great God! from the height of thy heaven thou beholdest great children and little children, and no others; and thy Son has long since declared which afford thee greatest pleasure. But they believe in him, and hear him not, — that, too, is an old story; and they train their children after their own image, etc.

Adieu, Wilhelm: I will not further bewilder myself with this subject.

JULY 1.

The consolation Charlotte can bring to an invalid I experience from my own heart, which suffers more from her absence than many a poor creature lingering on a bed of sickness. She is gone to spend a few days in the town with a very worthy woman, who is given over by the physicians, and wishes to have Charlotte near her in her last moments. I accompanied her last week on a visit to the vicar of S——, a small village in the mountains, about a league hence. We arrived about four o'clock: Charlotte had taken her

little sister with her. When we entered the vicarage court, we found the good old man sitting on a bench before the door, under the shade of two large walnut-trees. At the sight of Charlotte he seemed to gain new life, rose, forgot his stick, and ventured to walk toward her. She ran to him, and made him sit down again; then, placing herself by his side, she gave him a number of messages from her father, and then caught up his youngest child, a dirty, ugly little thing, the joy of his old age, and kissed it. I wish you could have witnessed her attention to this old man, — how she raised her voice on account of his deafness; how she told him of healthy young people, who had been carried off when it was least expected; praised the virtues of Carlsbad, and commended his determination to spend the ensuing summer there; and assured him that he looked better and stronger than he did when she saw him last. I, in the meantime, paid attention to his good lady. The old man seemed quite in spirits; and as I could not help admiring the beauty of the walnut-trees, which formed such an agreeable shade over our heads, he began, though with some little difficulty, to tell us their history. "As to the oldest," said he, "we do not know who planted it, — some say one clergyman, and some another: but the younger one, there behind us, is exactly the age of my wife, fifty years old next October; her father planted it in the morning, and in the evening she came into the world. My wife's father was my predecessor here, and I cannot tell you how fond he was of that tree; and it is fully as dear to me. Under the shade of that very tree, upon a log of wood, my wife was seated knitting, when I, a poor student, came into this court for the first time, just seven and twenty years ago." Charlotte inquired for his daughter. He said she was gone with Herr Schmidt to the meadows, and was with the haymakers. The old man then resumed his story,

and told us how his predecessor had taken a fancy to him, as had his daughter likewise; and how he had become first his curate, and subsequently his successor. He had scarcely finished his story when his daughter returned through the garden, accompanied by the above-mentioned Herr Schmidt. She welcomed Charlotte affectionately, and I confess I was much taken with her appearance. She was a lively-looking, good-humoured brunette, quite competent to amuse one for a short time in the country. Her lover (for such Herr Schmidt evidently appeared to be) was a polite, reserved personage, and would not join our conversation, notwithstanding all Charlotte's endeavours to draw him out. I was much annoyed at observing, by his countenance, that his silence did not arise from want of talent, but from caprice and ill-humour. This subsequently became very evident, when we set out to take a walk, and Frederica joining Charlotte, with whom I was talking, the worthy gentleman's face, which was naturally rather sombre, became so dark and angry that Charlotte was obliged to touch my arm, and remind me that I was talking too much to Frederica. Nothing distresses me more than to see men torment each other; particularly when in the flower of their age, in the very season of pleasure, they waste their few short days of sunshine in quarrels and disputes, and only perceive their error when it is too late to repair it. This thought dwelt upon my mind; and in the evening, when we returned to the vicar's, and were sitting round the table with our bread and milk, the conversation turned on the joys and sorrows of the world, I could not resist the temptation to inveigh bitterly against ill-humour. "We are apt," said I, "to complain, but with very little cause, that our happy days are few, and our evil days many. If our hearts were always disposed to receive the benefits Heaven sends us, we should acquire

strength to support evil when it comes." "But," observed the vicar's wife, "we cannot always command our tempers, so much depends upon the constitution: when the body suffers, the mind is ill at ease." "I acknowledge that," I continued; "but we must consider such a disposition in the light of a disease, and inquire whether there is no remedy for it."

"I should be glad to hear one," said Charlotte: "at least, I think very much depends upon ourselves; I know it is so with me. When anything annoys me, and disturbs my temper, I hasten into the garden, hum a couple of country dances, and it is all right with me directly." "That is what I meant," I replied; "ill-humour resembles indolence: it is natural to us; but if once we have courage to exert ourselves, we find our work run fresh from our hands, and we experience in the activity from which we shrank a real enjoyment." Frederica listened very attentively: and the young man objected, that we were not masters of ourselves, and still less so of our feelings. "The question is about a disagreeable feeling," I added, "from which every one would willingly escape, but none know their own power without trial. Invalids are glad to consult physicians, and submit to the most scrupulous regimen, the most nauseous medicines, in order to recover their health." I observed that the good old man inclined his head, and exerted himself to hear our discourse; so I raised my voice, and addressed myself directly to him. "We preach against a great many crimes," I observed, "but I never remember a sermon delivered against ill-humour." "That may do very well for your town clergymen," said he: "country people are never ill-humoured; though, indeed, it might be useful, occasionally, to my wife for instance, and the judge." We all laughed, as did he likewise very cordially, till he fell into a fit of cough-

ing, which interrupted our conversation for a time. Herr Schmidt resumed the subject. "You call ill-humour a crime," he remarked, "but I think you use too strong a term." "Not at all," I replied, "if that deserves the name which is so pernicious to ourselves and our neighbours. Is it not enough that we want the power to make one another happy, — must we deprive each other of the pleasure which we can all make for ourselves? Show me the man who has the courage to hide his ill-humour, who bears the whole burden himself, without disturbing the peace of those around him. No: ill-humour arises from an inward consciousness of our own want of merit, — from a discontent which ever accompanies that envy which foolish vanity engenders. We see people happy, whom we have not made so, and cannot endure the sight." Charlotte looked at me with a smile; she observed the emotion with which I spoke: and a tear in the eyes of Frederica stimulated me to proceed. "Woe unto those," I said, "who use their power over a human heart to destroy the simple pleasures it would naturally enjoy! All the favours, all the attentions, in the world cannot compensate for the loss of that happiness which a cruel tyranny has destroyed." My heart was full as I spoke. A recollection of many things which had happened pressed upon my mind, and filled my eyes with tears. "We should daily repeat to ourselves," I exclaimed, "that we should not interfere with our friends, unless to leave them in possession of their own joys, and increase their happiness by sharing it with them! But when their souls are tormented by a violent passion, or their hearts rent with grief, is it in your power to afford them the slightest consolation?

"And when the last fatal malady seizes the being whose untimely grave you have prepared, when she lies languid and exhausted before you, her dim eyes

raised to heaven, and the damp of death upon her pallid brow, then you stand at her bedside like a condemned criminal, with the bitter feeling that your whole fortune could not save her; and the agonising thought wrings you, that all your efforts are powerless to impart even a moment's strength to the departing soul, or quicken her with a transitory consolation."

At these words the remembrance of a similar scene at which I had been once present fell with full force upon my heart. I buried my face in my handkerchief, and hastened from the room, and was only recalled to my recollection by Charlotte's voice, who reminded me that it was time to return home. With what tenderness she chid me on the way for the too eager interest I took in everything! She declared it would do me injury, and that I ought to spare myself. Yes, my angel! I will do so for your sake.

JULY 6.

She is still with her dying friend, and is still the same bright, beautiful creature whose presence softens pain, and sheds happiness around whichever way she turns. She went out yesterday with her little sisters: I knew it, and went to meet them; and we walked together. In about an hour and a half we returned to the town. We stopped at the spring I am so fond of, and which is now a thousand times dearer to me than ever. Charlotte seated herself upon the low wall, and we gathered about her. I looked around, and recalled the time when my heart was unoccupied and free. "Dear fountain!" I said, "since that time I have no more come to enjoy cool repose by thy fresh stream: I have passed thee with careless steps, and scarcely bestowed a glance upon thee." I looked down, and observed Charlotte's little sister, Jane, coming up the steps with a glass of water. I turned toward Charlotte, and I

felt her influence over me. Jane at the moment approached with the glass. Her sister, Marianne, wished to take it from her. "No!" cried the child, with the sweetest expression of face, "Charlotte must drink first."

The affection and simplicity with which this was uttered so charmed me, that I sought to express my feelings by catching up the child and kissing her heartily. She was frightened, and began to cry. "You should not do that," said Charlotte: I felt perplexed. "Come, Jane," she continued, taking her hand, and leading her down the steps again, "it is no matter: wash yourself quickly in the fresh water." I stood and watched them; and when I saw the little dear rubbing her cheeks with her wet hands, in full belief that all the impurities contracted from my ugly beard would be washed off by the miraculous water, and how, though Charlotte said it would do, she continued still to wash with all her might, as though she thought too much were better than too little, I assure you, Wilhelm, I never attended a baptism with greater reverence; and, when Charlotte came up from the well, I could have prostrated myself as before the prophet of an Eastern nation.

In the evening I could not resist telling the story to a person who, I thought, possessed some natural feeling, because he was a man of understanding. But what a mistake I made. He maintained it was very wrong of Charlotte, — that we should not deceive children, — that such things occasioned countless mistakes and superstitions, from which we were bound to protect the young. It occurred to me then, that this very man had been baptised only a week before; so I said nothing further, but maintained the justice of my own convictions. We should deal with children as God deals with us, — we are happiest under the influence of innocent delusions.

JULY 8.

What a child is man that he should be so solicitous about a look! What a child is man! We had been to Walheim: the ladies went in a carriage; but during our walk I thought I saw in Charlotte's dark eyes — I am a fool — but forgive me! you should see them, — those eyes. — However, to be brief (for my own eyes are weighed down with sleep), you must know, when the ladies stepped into their carriage again, young W. Seldstadt, Andran, and I were standing about the door. They are a merry set of fellows, and they were all laughing and joking together. I watched Charlotte's eyes. They wandered from one to the other; but they did not light on me, — on me, who stood there motionless, and who saw nothing but her! My heart bade her a thousand times adieu, but she noticed me not. The carriage drove off, and my eyes filled with tears. I looked after her: suddenly I saw Charlotte's bonnet leaning out of the window, and she turned to look back, — was it at me? My dear friend, I know not; and in this uncertainty I find consolation. Perhaps she turned to look at me. Perhaps! Good-night — what a child I am!

JULY 10.

You should see how foolish I look in company when her name is mentioned, particularly when I am asked plainly how I like her. How I like her! — I detest the phrase. What sort of creature must he be who merely liked Charlotte, whose whole heart and senses were not entirely absorbed by her. Like her! Some one asked me lately how I liked Ossian.

JULY 11.

Madame M—— is very ill. I pray for her recovery, because Charlotte shares my sufferings. I see her occasionally at my friend's house, and to-day she

has told me the strangest circumstance. Old M—— is a covetous, miserly fellow, who has long worried and annoyed the poor lady sadly; but she has borne her afflictions patiently. A few days ago, when the physician informed us that her recovery was hopeless, she sent for her husband (Charlotte was present), and addressed him thus: "I have something to confess, which, after my decease, may occasion trouble and confusion. I have hitherto conducted your household as frugally and economically as possible, but you must pardon me for having defrauded you for thirty years. At the commencement of our married life, you allowed a small sum for the wants of the kitchen, and the other household expenses. When our establishment increased and our property grew larger, I could not persuade you to increase the weekly allowance in proportion: in short, you know, that, when our wants were greatest, you required me to supply everything with seven florins a week. I took the money from you without an observation, but made up the weekly deficiency from the money-chest; as nobody would suspect your wife of robbing the household bank. But I have wasted nothing, and should have been content to meet my eternal Judge without this confession, if she, upon whom the management of your establishment will devolve after my decease, would be free from embarrassment upon your insisting that the allowance made to me, your former wife, was sufficient."

I talked with Charlotte of the inconceivable manner in which men allow themselves to be blinded; how any one could avoid suspecting some deception, when seven florins only were allowed to defray expenses twice as great. But I have myself known people who believed, without any visible astonishment, that their house possessed the prophet's never-failing cruse of oil.

JULY 13.

No, I am not deceived. In her dark eyes I read a genuine interest in me and in my fortunes. Yes, I feel it; and I may believe my own heart which tells me — dare I say it? — dare I pronounce the divine words? — that she loves me!

That she loves me! How the idea exalts me in my own eyes! And, as you can understand my feelings, I may say to you, how I honour myself since she loves me!

Is this presumption, or is it a consciousness of the truth? I do not know a man able to supplant me in the heart of Charlotte; and yet when she speaks of her betrothed with so much warmth and affection, I feel like the soldier who has been stripped of his honours and titles, and deprived of his sword.

JULY 16.

How my heart beats when by accident I touch her finger, or my feet meet hers under the table! I draw back as if from a furnace; but a secret force impels me forward again, and my senses become disordered. Her innocent, unconscious heart never knows what agony these little familiarities inflict upon me. Sometimes when we are talking she lays her hand upon mine, and in the eagerness of conversation comes closer to me, and her balmy breath reaches my lips, — when I feel as if lightning had struck me, and that I could sink into the earth. And yet, Wilhelm, with all this heavenly confidence, — if I know myself, and should ever dare — you understand me. No, no! my heart is not so corrupt, — it is weak, weak enough — but is not that a degree of corruption?

She is to me a sacred being. All passion is still in her presence: I cannot express my sensations when I am near her. I feel as if my soul beat in every nerve of my body. There is a melody which she plays on

the piano with angelic skill, — so simple is it, and yet so spiritual! It is her favourite air; and, when she plays the first note, all pain, care, and sorrow disappear from me in a moment.

I believe every word that is said of the magic of ancient music. How her simple song enchants me! Sometimes, when I am ready to commit suicide, she sings that air; and instantly the gloom and madness which hung over me are dispersed, and I breathe freely again.

JULY 18.

Wilhelm, what is the world to our hearts without love? What is a magic-lantern without light? You have but to kindle the flame within, and the brightest figures shine on the white wall; and, if love only show us fleeting shadows, we are yet happy, when, like mere children, we behold them, and are transported with the splendid phantoms. I have not been able to see Charlotte to-day. I was prevented by company from which I could not disengage myself. What was to be done? I sent my servant to her house, that I might at least see somebody to-day who had been near her. Oh, the impatience with which I waited for his return! the joy with which I welcomed him! I should certainly have caught him in my arms, and kissed him, if I had not been ashamed.

It is said that the Bonona stone, when placed in the sun, attracts the rays, and for a time appears luminous in the dark. So was it with me and this servant. The idea that Charlotte's eyes had dwelt on his countenance, his cheek, his very apparel, endeared them all inestimably to me, so that at the moment I would not have parted from him for a thousand crowns. His presence made me so happy! Beware of laughing at me, Wilhelm. Can that be a delusion which makes us happy?

JULY 19.

"I shall see her to-day!" I exclaim with delight, when I rise in the morning, and look out with gladness of heart at the bright, beautiful sun. "I shall see her to-day!" And then I have no further wish to form: all, all is included in that one thought.

JULY 20.

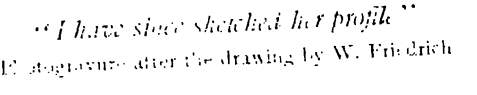
I cannot assent to your proposal that I should accompany the ambassador to ———. I do not love subordination; and we all know that he is a rough, disagreeable person to be connected with. You say my mother wishes me to be employed. I could not help laughing at that. Am I not sufficiently employed? And is it not in reality the same, whether I shell peas or count lentils? The world runs on from one folly to another; and the man who, solely from regard to the opinion of others, and without any wish or necessity of his own, toils after gold, honour, or any other phantom, is no better than a fool.

JULY 24.

You insist so much on my not neglecting my drawing, that it would be as well for me to say nothing as to confess how little I have lately done.

I never felt happier, I never understood nature better, even down to the veriest stem or smallest blade of grass; and yet I am unable to express myself: my powers of execution are so weak, everything seems to swim and float before me, so that I cannot make a clear, bold outline. But I fancy I should succeed better if I had some clay or wax to model. I shall try, if this state of mind continues much longer, and will take to modelling, if I only knead dough.

I have commenced Charlotte's portrait three times, and have as often disgraced myself. This is the more annoying, as I was formerly very happy in taking



"I have since sketched her profile"

Heliogravure after the drawing by W. Friedrich

likenesses. I have since sketched her profile, and must content myself with that.

JULY 25.

Yes, dear Charlotte! I will order and arrange everything. Only give me more commissions, the more the better. One thing, however, I must request: use no more writing-sand with the dear notes you send me. To-day I raised your letter hastily to my lips, and it set my teeth on edge.

JULY 26.

I have often determined not to see her so frequently. But who could keep such a resolution? Every day I am exposed to the temptation, and promise faithfully that to-morrow I will really stay away: but, when to-morrow comes, I find some irresistible reason for seeing her; and, before I can account for it, I am with her again. Either she has said on the previous evening, "You will be sure to call to-morrow," — and who could stay away then? — or she gives me some commission, and I find it essential to take her the answer in person; or the day is fine, and I walk to Walheim; and, when I am there, it is only half a league farther to her. I am within the charmed atmosphere, and soon find myself at her side. My grandmother used to tell us a story of a mountain of loadstone. When any vessels came near it, they were instantly deprived of their ironwork: the nails flew to the mountain, and the unhappy crew perished amidst the disjointed planks.

JULY 30.

Albert is arrived, and I must take my departure. Were he the best and noblest of men, and I in every respect his inferior, I could not endure to see him in possession of such a perfect being. Possession! —

enough, Wilhelm: her betrothed is here, — a fine, worthy fellow, whom one cannot help liking. Fortunately I was not present at their meeting. It would have broken my heart! And he is so considerate: he has not given Charlotte one kiss in my presence. Heaven reward him for it! I must love him for the respect with which he treats her. He shows a regard for me, but for this I suspect I am more indebted to Charlotte than to his own fancy for me. Women have a delicate tact in such matters, and it should be so. They cannot always succeed in keeping two rivals on terms with each other; but, when they do, they are the only gainers.

I cannot help esteeming Albert. The coolness of his temper contrasts strongly with the impetuosity of mine, which I cannot conceal. He has a great deal of feeling, and is fully sensible of the treasure he possesses in Charlotte. He is free from ill-humour, which you know is the fault I detest most.

He regards me as a man of sense; and my attachment to Charlotte, and the interest I take in all that concerns her, augment his triumph and his love. I shall not inquire whether he may not at times tease her with some little jealousies; as I know, that, were I in his place, I should not be entirely free from such sensations.

But, be that as it may, my pleasure with Charlotte is over. Call it folly or infatuation, what signifies a name? The thing speaks for itself. Before Albert came, I knew all that I know now. I knew I could make no pretensions to her, nor did I offer any, — that is, as far as it was possible, in the presence of so much loveliness, not to pant for its enjoyment. And now behold me, like a silly fellow, staring with astonishment when another comes in, and deprives me of my love.

I bite my lips, and feel infinite scorn for those who

tell me to be resigned, because there is no help for it. Let me escape from the yoke of such silly subterfuges! I ramble through the woods; and when I return to Charlotte, and find Albert sitting by her side in the summer-house in the garden, I am unable to bear it, behave like a fool, and commit a thousand extravagances. "For Heaven's sake," said Charlotte to-day, "let us have no more scenes like those of last night! You terrify me when you are so violent." Between ourselves, I am always away now when he visits her; and I feel delighted when I find her alone.

AUGUST 8.

Believe me, dear Wilhelm, I did not allude to you when I spoke so severely of those who advise resignation to inevitable fate. I did not think it possible for you to indulge such a sentiment. But in fact you are right. I only suggest one objection. In this world one is seldom reduced to make a selection between two alternatives. There are as many varieties of conduct and opinion as there are turns of feature between an aquiline nose and a flat one.

You will, therefore, permit me to concede your entire argument, and yet contrive means to escape your dilemma.

Your position is this, I hear you say: "Either you have hopes of obtaining Charlotte, or you have none. Well, in the first case, pursue your course, and press on to the fulfilment of your wishes. In the second, be a man, and shake off a miserable passion, which will enervate and destroy you." My dear friend, this is well and easily said.

But would you require a wretched being, whose life is slowly wasting under a lingering disease, to despatch himself at once by the stroke of a dagger? Does not the very disorder which consumes his strength deprive him of the courage to effect his deliverance?

You may answer me, if you please, with a similar analogy, "Who would not prefer the amputation of an arm to the periling of life by doubt and procrastination!" But I know not if I am right, and let us leave these comparisons.

Enough! There are moments, Wilhelm, when I could rise up and shake it all off, and when, if I only knew where to go, I could fly from this place.

THE SAME EVENING.

My diary, which I have for some time neglected, came before me to-day; and I am amazed to see how deliberately I have entangled myself step by step. To have seen my position so clearly, and yet to have acted so like a child! Even still I behold the result plainly, and yet have no thought of acting with greater prudence.

AUGUST 10.

If I were not a fool, I could spend the happiest and most delightful life here. So many agreeable circumstances, and of a kind to ensure a worthy man's happiness, are seldom united. Alas! I feel it too sensibly, — the heart alone makes our happiness! To be admitted into this most charming family, to be loved by the father as a son, by the children as a father, and by Charlotte! — then the noble Albert, who never disturbs my happiness by any appearance of ill-humour, receiving me with the heartiest affection, and loving me, next to Charlotte, better than all the world! Wilhelm, you would be delighted to hear us in our rambles, and conversations about Charlotte. Nothing in the world can be more absurd than our connection, and yet the thought of it often moves me to tears.

He tells me sometimes of her excellent mother; how, upon her death-bed, she had committed her house and children to Charlotte, and had given Charlotte her-

self in charge to him; how, since that time, a new spirit had taken possession of her; how, in care and anxiety for their welfare, she became a real mother to them; how every moment of her time was devoted to some labour of love in their behalf, — and yet her mirth and cheerfulness had never forsaken her. I walk by his side, pluck flowers by the way, arrange them carefully into a nosegay, then fling them into the first stream I pass, and watch them as they float gently away. I forget whether I told you that Albert is to remain here. He has received a government appointment, with a very good salary; and I understand he is in high favour at court. I have met few persons so punctual and methodical in business.

AUGUST 12.

Certainly Albert is the best fellow in the world. I had a strange scene with him yesterday. I went to take leave of him; for I took it into my head to spend a few days in these mountains, from where I now write to you. As I was walking up and down his room, my eye fell upon his pistols. "Lend me those pistols," said I, "for my journey." "By all means," he replied, "if you will take the trouble to load them; for they only hang there for form." I took down one of them; and he continued, "Ever since I was near suffering for my extreme caution, I will have nothing to do with such things." I was curious to hear the story. "I was staying," said he, "some three months ago, at a friend's house in the country. I had a brace of pistols with me, unloaded; and I slept without any anxiety. One rainy afternoon I was sitting by myself, doing nothing, when it occurred to me — I do not know how — that the house might be attacked, that we might require the pistols, that we might — in short, you know how we go on fancying, when we have nothing better to do. I gave the pistols to the servant, to clean and load.

He was playing with the maid, and trying to frighten her, when the pistol went off — God knows how! — the ramrod was in the barrel; and it went straight through her right hand, and shattered the thumb. I had to endure all the lamentation, and to pay the surgeon's bill; so, since that time, I have kept all my weapons unloaded. But, my dear friend, what is the use of prudence? We can never be on our guard against all possible dangers. However," — now, you must know I can tolerate all men till they come to "however;" for it is self-evident that every universal rule must have its exceptions. But he is so exceedingly accurate, that, if he only fancies he has said a word too precipitate, or too general, or only half true, he never ceases to qualify, to modify, and extenuate, till at last he appears to have said nothing at all. Upon this occasion, Albert was deeply immersed in his subject: I ceased to listen to him, and became lost in reverie. With a sudden motion, I pointed the mouth of the pistol to my forehead, over the right eye. "What do you mean?" cried Albert, turning back the pistol. "It is not loaded," said I. "And even if not," he answered with impatience, "what can you mean? I cannot comprehend how a man can be so mad as to shoot himself, and the bare idea of it shocks me."

"But why should any one," said I, "in speaking of an action, venture to pronounce it mad or wise, or good or bad? What is the meaning of all this? Have you carefully studied the secret motives of our actions? Do you understand — can you explain the causes which occasion them, and make them inevitable? If you can, you will be less hasty with your decision."

"But you will allow," said Albert, "that some actions are criminal, let them spring from whatever motives they may." I granted it, and shrugged my shoulders.

"But still, my good friend," I continued, "there are

some exceptions here too. Theft is a crime; but the man who commits it from extreme poverty, with no design but to save his family from perishing, is he an object of pity, or of punishment? Who shall throw the first stone at a husband, who, in the heat of just resentment, sacrifices his faithless wife and her perfidious seducer? or at the young maiden, who, in her weak hour of rapture, forgets herself in the impetuous joys of love? Even our laws, cold and cruel as they are, relent in such cases, and withhold their punishment."

"That is quite another thing," said Albert; "because a man under the influence of violent passion loses all power of reflection, and is regarded as intoxicated or insane."

"Oh! you people of sound understandings," I replied, smiling, "are ever ready to exclaim 'Extravagance, and madness, and intoxication!' You moral men are so calm and so subdued! You abhor the drunken man, and detest the extravagant; you pass by, like the Levite, and thank God, like the Pharisee, that you are not like one of them. I have been more than once intoxicated, my passions have always bordered on extravagance: I am not ashamed to confess it; for I have learned, by my own experience, that all extraordinary men, who have accomplished great and astonishing actions, have ever been decried by the world as drunken or insane. And in private life, too, is it not intolerable that no one can undertake the execution of a noble or generous deed, without giving rise to the exclamation that the doer is intoxicated or mad? Shame upon you, ye sages!"

"This is another of your extravagant humours," said Albert: "you always exaggerate a case, and in this matter you are undoubtedly wrong; for we were speaking of suicide, which you compare with great actions, when it is impossible to regard it as anything but a

weakness. It is much easier to die than to bear a life of misery with fortitude."

I was on the point of breaking off the conversation, for nothing puts me so completely out of patience as the utterance of a wretched commonplace when I am talking from my inmost heart. However, I composed myself, for I had often heard the same observation with sufficient vexation; and I answered him, therefore, with a little warmth, "You call this a weakness — beware of being led astray by appearances. When a nation, which has long groaned under the intolerable yoke of a tyrant, rises at last and throws off its chains, do you call that weakness? The man who, to rescue his house from the flames, finds his physical strength redoubled, so that he lifts burdens with ease, which, in the absence of excitement, he could scarcely move; he who, under the rage of an insult, attacks and puts to flight half a score of his enemies, — are such persons to be called weak? My good friend, if resistance be strength, how can the highest degree of resistance be a weakness?"

Albert looked steadfastly at me, and said, "Pray forgive me, but I do not see that the examples you have adduced bear any relation to the question." "Very likely," I answered; "for I have often been told that my style of illustration borders a little on the absurd. But let us see if we cannot place the matter in another point of view, by inquiring what can be a man's state of mind who resolves to free himself from the burden of life, — a burden often so pleasant to bear, — for we cannot otherwise reason fairly upon the subject.

"Human nature," I continued, "has its limits. It is able to endure a certain degree of joy, sorrow, and pain, but becomes annihilated as soon as this measure is exceeded. The question, therefore, is, not whether a man is strong or weak, but whether he is able to endure the measure of his sufferings. The suffering

may be moral or physical; and in my opinion it is just as asburd to call a man a coward who destroys himself, as to call a man a coward who dies of a malignant fever."

"Paradox, all paradox!" exclaimed Albert. "Not so paradoxical as you imagine," I replied. "You allow that we designate a disease as mortal when nature is so severely attacked, and her strength so far exhausted, that she cannot possibly recover her former condition under any change that may take place.

"Now, my good friend, apply this to the mind; observe a man in his natural, isolated condition; consider how ideas work, and how impressions fasten on him, till at length a violent passion seizes him, destroying all his powers of calm reflection, and utterly ruining him.

"It is in vain that a man of sound mind and cool temper understands the condition of such a wretched being, in vain he counsels him. He can no more communicate his own wisdom to him than a healthy man can instil his strength into the invalid, by whose bedside he is seated."

Albert thought this too general. I reminded him of a girl who had drowned herself a short time previously, and I related her history.

She was a good creature, who had grown up in the narrow sphere of household industry and weekly-appointed labour; one who knew no pleasure beyond indulging in a walk on Sundays, arrayed in her best attire, accompanied by her friends, or perhaps joining in the dance now and then at some festival, and chatting away her spare hours with a neighbour, discussing the scandal or the quarrels of the village, — trifles sufficient to occupy her heart. At length the warmth of her nature is influenced by certain new and unknown wishes. Inflamed by the flatteries of men, her former pleasures become by degrees insipid, till at length she

meets with a youth to whom she is attracted by an indescribable feeling; upon him she now rests all her hopes; she forgets the world around her; she sees, hears, desires nothing but him, and him only. He alone occupies all her thoughts. Uncorrupted by the idle indulgence of an enervating vanity, her affection moving steadily toward its object, she hopes to become his, and to realise, in an everlasting union with him, all that happiness which she sought, all that bliss for which she longed. His repeated promises confirm her hopes: embraces and endearments, which increase the ardour of her desires, overmaster her soul. She floats in a dim, delusive anticipation of her happiness; and her feelings become excited to their utmost tension. She stretches out her arms finally to embrace the object of all her wishes — and her lover forsakes her. Stunned and bewildered, she stands upon a precipice. All is darkness around her. No prospect, no hope, no consolation — forsaken by him in whom her existence was centred! She sees nothing of the wide world before her, thinks nothing of the many individuals who might supply the void in her heart; she feels herself deserted, forsaken by the world; and, blinded and impelled by the agony which wrings her soul, she plunges into the deep, to end her sufferings in the broad embrace of death. See here, Albert, the history of thousands; and tell me, is not this a case of physical infirmity? Nature has no way to escape from the labyrinth: her powers are exhausted: she can contend no longer, and the poor soul must die.

"Shame upon him who can look on calmly, and exclaim, 'The foolish girl! she should have waited; she should have allowed time to wear off the impression; her despair would have been softened, and she would have found another lover to comfort her.' One might as well say, 'The fool, to die of a fever! why did he not wait till his strength was restored, till his

blood became calm? all would then have gone well, and he would have been alive now.'"

Albert, who could not see the justice of the comparison, offered some further objections, and, amongst others, urged that I had taken the case of a mere ignorant girl. But how any man of sense, of more enlarged views and experience, could be excused, he was unable to comprehend. "My friend!" I exclaimed, "man is but man; and, whatever be the extent of his reasoning powers, they are of little avail when passion rages within, and he feels himself confined by the narrow limits of nature. It were better, then — but we will talk of this some other time," I said, and caught up my hat. Alas! my heart was full; and we parted without conviction on either side. How rarely in this world do men understand each other!

AUGUST 15.

There can be no doubt that in this world nothing is so indispensable as love. I observe that Charlotte could not lose me without a pang, and the very children have but one wish; that is, that I should visit them again to-morrow. I went this afternoon to tune Charlotte's piano. But I could not do it, for the little ones insisted on my telling them a story; and Charlotte herself urged me to satisfy them. I waited upon them at tea, and they are now as fully contented with me as with Charlotte; and I told them my very best tale of the princess who was waited upon by dwarfs. I improve myself by this exercise, and am quite surprised at the impression my stories create. If I sometimes invent an incident which I forget upon the next narration, they remind me directly that the story was different before; so that I now endeavour to relate with exactness the same anecdote in the same monotonous tone, which never changes. I find by this, how much

an author injures his works by altering them, even though they be improved in a poetical point of view. The first impression is readily received. We are so constituted that we believe the most incredible things; and, once they are engraved upon the memory, woe to him who would endeavour to efface them.

AUGUST 18.

Must it ever be thus, — that the source of our happiness must also be the fountain of our misery? The full and ardent sentiment which animated my heart with the love of nature, overwhelming me with a torrent of delight, and which brought all paradise before me, has now become an insupportable torment, — a demon which perpetually pursues and harasses me. When in bygone days I gazed from these rocks upon yonder mountains across the river, and upon the green, flowery valley before me, and saw all nature budding and bursting around; the hills clothed from foot to peak with tall, thick forest trees; the valleys in all their varied windings, shaded with the loveliest woods; and the soft river gliding along amongst the lisping reeds, mirroring the beautiful clouds which the soft evening breeze wafted across the sky, — when I heard the groves about me melodious with the music of birds, and saw the million swarms of insects dancing in the last golden beams of the sun, whose setting rays awoke the humming beetles from their grassy beds, whilst the subdued tumult around directed my attention to the ground, and I there observed the arid rock compelled to yield nutriment to the dry moss, whilst the heath flourished upon the barren sands below me, — all this displayed to me the inner warmth which animates all nature, and filled and glowed within my heart. I felt myself exalted by this overflowing fulness to the perception of the Godhead, and the glorious forms of an infinite universe became visible to my

soul! Stupendous mountains encompassed me, abysses yawned at my feet, and cataracts fell headlong down before me; impetuous rivers rolled through the plain, and rocks and mountains resounded from afar. In the depths of the earth I saw innumerable powers in motion, and multiplying to infinity; whilst upon its surface, and beneath the heavens, there teemed ten thousand varieties of living creatures. Everything around is alive with an infinite number of forms; while mankind fly for security to their petty houses, from the shelter of which they rule in their imaginations over the wide-extended universe. Poor fool! in whose petty estimation all things are little. From the inaccessible mountains, across the desert which no mortal foot has trod, far as the confines of the unknown ocean, breathes the spirit of the eternal Creator; and every atom to which he has given existence finds favour in his sight. Ah, how often at that time has the flight of a bird, soaring above my head, inspired me with the desire of being transported to the shores of the immeasurable waters, there to quaff the pleasures of life from the foaming goblet of the Infinite, and to partake, if but for a moment even, with the confined powers of my soul, the beatitude of that Creator who accomplishes all things in himself, and through himself!

My dear friend, the bare recollection of those hours still consoles me. Even this effort to recall those ineffable sensations, and give them utterance, exalts my soul above itself, and makes me doubly feel the intensity of my present anguish.

It is as if a curtain had been drawn from before my eyes, and, instead of prospects of eternal life, the abyss of an ever open grave yawned before me. Can we say of anything that it exists when all passes away,— when time, with the speed of a storm, carries all things onward,— and our transitory existence, hurried along

by the torrent, is either swallowed up by the waves or dashed against the rocks? There is not a moment but preys upon you, and upon all around you, — not a moment in which you do not yourself become a destroyer. The most innocent walk deprives of life thousands of poor insects: one step destroys the fabric of the industrious ant, and converts a little world into chaos. No: it is not the great and rare calamities of the world, the floods which sweep away whole villages, the earthquakes which swallow up our towns, that affect me. My heart is wasted by the thought of that destructive power which lies concealed in every part of universal nature. Nature has formed nothing that does not consume itself, and every object near it: so that, surrounded by earth and air, and all the active powers, I wander on my way with aching heart; and the universe is to me a fearful monster, for ever devouring its own offspring.

AUGUST 21.

In vain do I stretch out my arms toward her when I awaken in the morning from my weary slumbers. In vain do I seek for her at night in my bed, when some innocent dream has happily deceived me, and placed her near me in the fields, when I have seized her hand and covered it with countless kisses. And when I feel for her in the half confusion of sleep, with the happy sense that she is near, tears flow from my oppressed heart; and, bereft of all comfort, I weep over my future woes.

AUGUST 22.

What a misfortune, Wilhelm! My active spirits have degenerated into contented indolence. I cannot be idle, and yet I am unable to set to work. I cannot think: I have no longer any feeling for the beauties of nature, and books are distasteful to me. Once we give

ourselves up, we are totally lost. Many a time and oft I wish I were a common labourer; that, awakening in the morning, I might have but one prospect, one pursuit, one hope, for the day which has dawned. I often envy Albert when I see him buried in a heap of papers and parchments, and I fancy I should be happy were I in his place. Often impressed with this feeling, I have been on the point of writing to you and to the minister, for the appointment at the embassy, which you think I might obtain. I believe I might procure it. The minister has long shown a regard for me, and has frequently urged me to seek employment. It is the business of an hour only. Now and then the fable of the horse recurs to me. Weary of liberty, he suffered himself to be saddled and bridled, and was ridden to death for his pains. I know not what to determine upon. For is not this anxiety for change the consequence of that restless spirit which would pursue me equally in every situation of life?

AUGUST 28.

If my ills would admit of any cure, they would certainly be cured here. This is my birthday, and early in the morning I received a packet from Albert. Upon opening it, I found one of the pink ribbons which Charlotte wore in her dress the first time I saw her, and which I had several times asked her to give me. With it were two volumes in duodecimo of Wetstein's "Homer," a book I had often wished for, to save me the inconvenience of carrying the large Ernestine edition with me upon my walks. You see how they anticipate my wishes, how well they understand all those little attentions of friendship, so superior to the costly presents of the great, which are humiliating. I kissed the ribbon a thousand times, and in every breath inhaled the remembrance of those happy and irrevocable days which filled me with the keenest joy.

Such, Wilhelm, is our fate. I do not murmur at it: the flowers of life are but visionary. How many pass away, and leave no trace behind — how few yield any fruit — and the fruit itself, how rarely does it ripen! And yet there are flowers enough! — and is it not strange, my friend, that we should suffer the little that does really ripen, to rot, decay, and perish unenjoyed? Farewell! This is a glorious summer. I often climb into the trees in Charlotte's orchard, and shake down the pears that hang on the highest branches. She stands below, and catches them as they fall.

AUGUST 30.

Unhappy being that I am! Why do I thus deceive myself? What is to come of all this wild, aimless, endless passion? I cannot pray except to her. My imagination sees nothing but her: all surrounding objects are of no account, except as they relate to her. In this dreamy state I enjoy many happy hours, till at length I feel compelled to tear myself away from her. Ah, Wilhelm, to what does not my heart often compel me! When I have spent several hours in her company, till I feel completely absorbed by her figure, her grace, the divine expression of her thoughts, my mind becomes gradually excited to the highest excess, my sight grows dim, my hearing confused, my breathing oppressed as if by the hand of a murderer, and my beating heart seeks to obtain relief for my aching senses. I am sometimes unconscious whether I really exist. If in such moments I find no sympathy, and Charlotte does not allow me to enjoy the melancholy consolation of bathing her hand with my tears, I feel compelled to tear myself from her, when I either wander through the country, climb some precipitous cliff, or force a path through the trackless thicket, where I am lacerated and torn by thorns and briers; and thence I find relief. Sometimes I lie stretched on

the ground, overcome with fatigue and dying with thirst; sometimes, late in the night, when the moon shines above me, I recline against an aged tree in some sequestered forest, to rest my weary limbs, when, exhausted and worn, I sleep till break of day. O Wilhelm! the hermit's cell, his sackcloth, and girdle of thorns would be luxury and indulgence compared with what I suffer. Adieu! I see no end to this wretchedness except the grave.

SEPTEMBER 3.

I must away. Thank you, Wilhelm, for determining my wavering purpose. For a whole fortnight I have thought of leaving her. I must away. She has returned to town, and is at the house of a friend. And then, Albert — yes, I must go.

SEPTEMBER 10.

Oh, what a night, Wilhelm! I can henceforth bear anything. I shall never see her again. Oh, why cannot I fall on your neck, and, with floods of tears and raptures, give utterance to all the passions which distract my heart! Here I sit gasping for breath, and struggling to compose myself. I wait for day, and at sunrise the horses are to be at the door.

And she is sleeping calmly, little suspecting that she has seen me for the last time. I am free. I have had the courage, in an interview of two hours' duration, not to betray my intention. And O Wilhelm, what a conversation it was!

Albert had promised to come to Charlotte in the garden immediately after supper. I was upon the terrace under the tall chestnut-trees, and watched the setting sun. I saw him sink for the last time beneath this delightful valley and silent stream. I had often visited the same spot with Charlotte, and witnessed that glorious sight; and now — I was walking

up and down the very avenue which was so dear to me. A secret sympathy had frequently drawn me thither before I knew Charlotte; and we were delighted when, in our early acquaintance, we discovered that we each loved the same spot, which is indeed as romantic as any that ever captivated the fancy of an artist.

From beneath the chestnut-trees, there is an extensive view. But I remember that I have mentioned all this in a former letter, and have described the tall mass of beech-trees at the end, and how the avenue grows darker and darker as it winds its way among them, till it ends in a gloomy recess, which has all the charm of a mysterious solitude. I still remember the strange feeling of melancholy which came over me the first time I entered that dark retreat, at bright midday. I felt some secret foreboding that it would, one day, be to me the scene of some happiness or misery.

I had spent half an hour struggling between the contending thoughts of going and returning, when I heard them coming up the terrace. I ran to meet them. I trembled as I took her hand, and kissed it. As we reached the top of the terrace, the moon rose from behind the wooded hill. We conversed on many subjects, and, without perceiving it, approached the gloomy recess. Charlotte entered, and sat down. Albert seated himself beside her. I did the same, but my agitation did not suffer me to remain long seated. I got up, and stood before her, then walked backward and forward, and sat down again. I was restless and miserable. Charlotte drew our attention to the beautiful effect of the moonlight, which threw a silver hue over the terrace in front of us, beyond the beech-trees. It was a glorious sight, and was rendered more striking by the darkness which surrounded the spot where we were. We remained for some time

silent, when Charlotte observed, "Whenever I walk by moonlight, it brings to my remembrance all my beloved and departed friends, and I am filled with thoughts of death and futurity. We shall live again, Werther!" she continued, with a firm but feeling voice; "but shall we know one another again — what do you think? what do you say?"

"Charlotte," I said, as I took her hand in mine, and my eyes filled with tears, "we shall see each other again — here and hereafter we shall meet again." I could say no more. Why, Wilhelm, should she put this question to me, just at the moment when the fear of our cruel separation filled my heart?

"And oh! do those departed ones know how we are employed here? do they know when we are well and happy? do they know when we recall their memories with the fondest love? In the silent hour of evening the shade of my mother hovers around me; when seated in the midst of my children, I see them assembled near me, as they used to assemble near her; and then I raise my anxious eyes to heaven, and wish she could look down upon us, and witness how I fulfil the promise I made to her in her last moments, to be a mother to her children. With what emotion do I then exclaim, 'Pardon, dearest of mothers, pardon me, if I do not adequately supply your place! Alas! I do my utmost. They are clothed and fed; and, still better, they are loved and educated. Could you but see, sweet saint! the peace and harmony that dwells amongst us, you would glorify God with the warmest feelings of gratitude, to whom, in your last hour, you addressed such fervent prayers for our happiness.'" Thus did she express herself; but O Wilhelm! who can do justice to her language? how can cold and passionless words convey the heavenly expressions of the spirit? Albert interrupted her gently. "This affects you too deeply, my dear Charlotte. I know your soul

dwells on such recollections with intense delight; but I implore —" "O Albert!" she continued, "I am sure you do not forget the evenings when we three used to sit at the little round table, when papa was absent, and the little ones had retired. You often had a good book with you, but seldom read it; the conversation of that noble being was preferable to everything, — that beautiful, bright, gentle, and yet ever-toiling woman. God alone knows how I have supplicated with tears on my nightly couch, that I might be like her."

I threw myself at her feet, and, seizing her hand, bedewed it with a thousand tears. "Charlotte!" I exclaimed, "God's blessing and your mother's spirit are upon you." "Oh! that you had known her," she said, with a warm pressure of the hand. "She was worthy of being known to you." I thought I should have fainted: never had I received praise so flattering. She continued, "And yet she was doomed to die in the flower of her youth, when her youngest child was scarcely six months old. Her illness was but short, but she was calm and resigned; and it was only for her children, especially the youngest, that she felt unhappy. When her end drew nigh, she bade me bring them to her. I obeyed. The younger ones knew nothing of their approaching loss, while the elder ones were quite overcome with grief. They stood around the bed; and she raised her feeble hands to heaven, and prayed over them; then, kissing them in turn, she dismissed them, and said to me, 'Be you a mother to them.' I gave her my hand. 'You are promising much, my child,' she said: 'a mother's fondness and a mother's care! I have often witnessed, by your tears of gratitude, that you know what is a mother's tenderness: show it to your brothers and sisters, and be dutiful and faithful to your father as a wife; you will be his comfort.' She inquired for him. He had retired to conceal his intolerable anguish,—he was heartbroken.

"Albert, you were in the room. She heard some one moving: she inquired who it was, and desired you to approach. She surveyed us both with a look of composure and satisfaction, expressive of her conviction that we should be happy, — happy with one another." Albert fell upon her neck, and kissed her, and exclaimed, "We are so, and we shall be so!" Even Albert, generally so tranquil, had quite lost his composure; and I was excited beyond expression.

"And such a being," she continued, "was to leave us, Werther! Great God, must we thus part with everything we hold dear in this world? Nobody felt this more acutely than the children: they cried and lamented for a long time afterward, complaining that black men had carried away their dear mamma."

Charlotte rose. It aroused me; but I continued sitting, and held her hand. "Let us go," she said: "it grows late." She attempted to withdraw her hand: I held it still. "We shall see each other again," I exclaimed: "we shall recognise each other under every possible change! I am going," I continued, "going willingly; but, should I say for ever, perhaps I may not keep my word. Adieu, Charlotte; adieu, Albert. We shall meet again." "Yes: to-morrow, I think," she answered with a smile. To-morrow! how I felt the word! Ah! she little thought, when she drew her hand away from mine. They walked down the avenue. I stood gazing after them in the moonlight. I threw myself upon the ground, and wept: I then sprang up, and ran out upon the terrace, and saw, under the shade of the linden-trees, her white dress disappearing near the garden-gate. I stretched out my arms, and she vanished.

BOOK II.

OCTOBER 20.

WE arrived here yesterday. The ambassador is indisposed, and will not go out for some days. If he were less peevish and morose, all would be well. I see but too plainly that Heaven has destined me to severe trials; but courage! a light heart may bear anything. A light heart! I smile to find such a word proceeding from my pen. A little more lightheartedness would render me the happiest being under the sun. But must I despair of my talents and faculties, whilst others of far inferior abilities parade before me with the utmost self-satisfaction? Gracious Providence, to whom I owe all my powers, why didst thou not withhold some of those blessings I possess, and substitute in their place a feeling of self-confidence and contentment?

But patience! all will yet be well; for I assure you, my dear friend, you were right: since I have been obliged to associate continually with other people, and observe what they do, and how they employ themselves, I have become far better satisfied with myself. For we are so constituted by nature, that we are ever prone to compare ourselves with others; and our happiness or misery depends very much on the objects and persons around us. On this account, nothing is more dangerous than solitude: there our imagination, always disposed to rise, taking a new flight on the wings of fancy, pictures to us a chain of beings of

whom we seem the most inferior. All things appear greater than they really are, and all seem superior to us. This operation of the mind is quite natural: we so continually feel our own imperfections, and fancy we perceive in others the qualities we do not possess, attributing to them also all that we enjoy ourselves, that by this process we form the idea of a perfect, happy man, — a man, however, who only exists in our own imagination.

But when, in spite of weakness and disappointments, we set to work in earnest, and persevere steadily, we often find, that, though obliged continually to tack, we make more way than others who have the assistance of wind and tide; and, in truth, there can be no greater satisfaction than to keep pace with others or outstrip them in the race.

NOVEMBER 26.

I begin to find my situation here more tolerable, considering all circumstances. I find a great advantage in being much occupied; and the number of persons I meet, and their different pursuits, create a varied entertainment for me. I have formed the acquaintance of the Count C——, and I esteem him more and more every day. He is a man of strong understanding and great discernment; but, though he sees farther than other people, he is not on that account cold in his manner, but capable of inspiring and returning the warmest affection. He appeared interested in me on one occasion, when I had to transact some business with him. He perceived, at the first word, that we understood each other, and that he could converse with me in a different tone from what he used with others. I cannot sufficiently esteem his frank and open kindness to me. It is the greatest and most genuine of pleasures to observe a great mind in sympathy with our own.

DECEMBER 24.

As I anticipated, the ambassador occasions me infinite annoyance. He is the most punctilious blockhead under heaven. He does everything step by step, with the trifling minuteness of an old woman; and he is a man whom it is impossible to please, because he is never pleased with himself. I like to do business regularly and cheerfully, and, when it is finished, to leave it. But he constantly returns my papers to me, saying, "They will do," but recommending me to look over them again, as "one may always improve by using a better word or a more appropriate particle." I then lose all patience, and wish myself at the devil's. Not a conjunction, not an adverb, must be omitted: he has a deadly antipathy to all those transpositions of which I am so fond; and, if the music of our periods is not tuned to the established official key, he cannot comprehend our meaning. It is deplorable to be connected with such a fellow.

My acquaintance with the Count C—— is the only compensation for such an evil. He told me frankly, the other day, that he was much displeased with the difficulties and delays of the ambassador; that people like him are obstacles, both to themselves and to others. "But," added he, "one must submit, like a traveller who has to ascend a mountain: if the mountain was not there, the road would be both shorter and pleasanter; but there it is, and he must get over it."

The old man perceives the count's partiality for me: this annoys him, and he seizes every opportunity to depreciate the count in my hearing. I naturally defend him, and that only makes matters worse. Yesterday he made me indignant, for he also alluded to me. "The count," he said, "is a man of the world, and a good man of business: his style is good, and he writes with facility; but, like other geniuses, he has no solid learning." He looked at me with an expression

that seemed to ask if I felt the blow. But it did not produce the desired effect: I despise a man who can think and act in such a manner. However, I made a stand, and answered with not a little warmth. The count, I said, was a man entitled to respect, alike for his character and his acquirements. I had never met a person whose mind was stored with more useful and extensive knowledge, — who had, in fact, mastered such an infinite variety of subjects, and who yet retained all his activity for the details of ordinary business. This was altogether beyond his comprehension; and I took my leave, lest my anger should be too highly excited by some new absurdity of his.

And you are to blame for all this, you who persuaded me to bend my neck to this yoke by preaching a life of activity to me. If the man who plants vegetables, and carries his corn to town on market-days, is not more usefully employed than I am, then let me work ten years longer at the galleys to which I am now chained.

Oh, the brilliant wretchedness, the weariness, that one is doomed to witness among the silly people whom we meet in society here! The ambition of rank! How they watch, how they toil, to gain precedence! What poor and contemptible passions are displayed in their utter nakedness! We have a woman here, for example, who never ceases to entertain the company with accounts of her family and her estates. Any stranger would consider her a silly being, whose head was turned by her pretensions to rank and property; but she is in reality even more ridiculous, — the daughter of a mere magistrate's clerk from this neighbourhood. I cannot understand how human beings can so debase themselves.

Every day I observe more and more the folly of judging of others by ourselves; and I have so much trouble with myself, and my own heart is in such con-

stant agitation, that I am well content to let others pursue their own course, if they only allow me the same privilege.

What provokes me most is the unhappy extent to which distinctions of rank are carried. I know perfectly well how necessary are inequalities of condition, and I am sensible of the advantages I myself derive therefrom; but I would not have these institutions prove a barrier to the small chance of happiness which I may enjoy on this earth.

I have lately become acquainted with a Miss B——, a very agreeable girl, who has retained her natural manners in the midst of artificial life. Our first conversation pleased us both equally; and, at taking leave, I requested permission to visit her. She consented in so obliging a manner, that I waited with impatience for the arrival of the happy moment. She is not a native of this place, but resides here with her aunt. The countenance of the old lady is not prepossessing. I paid her much attention, addressing the greater part of my conversation to her; and, in less than half an hour, I discovered what her niece subsequently acknowledged to me, that her aged aunt, having but a small fortune, and a still smaller share of understanding, enjoys no satisfaction except in the pedigree of her ancestors, no protection save in her noble birth, and no enjoyment but in looking from her castle over the heads of the humble citizens. She was, no doubt, handsome in her youth, and in her early years probably trifled away her time in rendering many a poor youth the sport of her caprice: in her riper years she has submitted to the yoke of a veteran officer, who, in return for her person and her small independence, has spent with her what we may designate her age of brass. He is dead; and she is now a widow, and deserted. She spends her iron age alone, and would not be approached, except for the loveliness of her niece.

JANUARY 8, 1772.

What beings are men, whose whole thoughts are occupied with form and ceremony, who for years together devote their mental and physical exertions to the task of advancing themselves but one step, and endeavouring to occupy a higher place at the table. Not that such persons would otherwise want employment: on the contrary, they give themselves much trouble by neglecting important business for such petty trifles. Last week a question of precedence arose at a sledging-party, and all our amusement was spoiled.

The silly creatures cannot see that it is not place which constitutes real greatness, since the man who occupies the first place but seldom plays the principal part. How many kings are governed by their ministers — how many ministers by their secretaries? Who, in such cases, is really the chief? He, as it seems to me, who can see through the others, and possesses strength or skill enough to make their power or passions subservient to the execution of his own designs.

JANUARY 20.

I must write to you from this place, my dear Charlotte, from a small room in a country inn, where I have taken shelter from a severe storm. During my whole residence in that wretched place D——, where I lived amongst strangers, — strangers, indeed, to this heart, — I never at any time felt the smallest inclination to correspond with you; but in this cottage, in this retirement, in this solitude, with the snow and hail beating against my lattice-pane, you are my first thought. The instant I entered, your figure rose up before me, and the remembrance! O my Charlotte, the sacred, tender remembrance! Gracious Heaven! restore to me the happy moment of our first acquaintance.

Could you but see me, my dear Charlotte, in the whirl of dissipation, — how my senses are dried up,

but my heart is at no time full. I enjoy no single moment of happiness: all is vain — nothing touches me. I stand, as it were, before the raree-show: I see the little puppets move, and I ask whether it is not an optical illusion. I am amused with these puppets, or, rather, I am myself one of them: but, when I sometimes grasp my neighbour's hand, I feel that it is not natural; and I withdraw mine with a shudder. In the evening I say I will enjoy the next morning's sunrise, and yet I remain in bed: in the day I promise to ramble by moonlight; and I, nevertheless, remain at home. I know not why I rise, nor why I go to sleep.

The leaven which animated my existence is gone: the charm which cheered me in the gloom of night, and aroused me from my morning slumbers, is for ever fled.

I have found but one being here to interest me, a Miss B——. She resembles you, my dear Charlotte, if any one can possibly resemble you. "Ah!" you will say, "he has learned how to pay fine compliments." And this is partly true. I have been very agreeable lately, as it was not in my power to be otherwise. I have, moreover, a deal of wit: and the ladies say that no one understands flattery better, or falsehoods you will add; since the one accomplishment invariably accompanies the other. But I must tell you of Miss B——. She has abundance of soul, which flashes from her deep blue eyes. Her rank is a torment to her, and satisfies no one desire of her heart. She would gladly retire from this whirl of fashion, and we often picture to ourselves a life of undisturbed happiness in distant scenes of rural retirement: and then we speak of you, my dear Charlotte; for she knows you, and renders homage to your merits; but her homage is not exacted, but voluntary, — she loves you, and delights to hear you made the subject of conversation.

Oh, that I were sitting at your feet in your favourite

little room, with the dear children playing around us! If they became troublesome to you, I would tell them some appalling goblin story; and they would crowd round me with silent attention. The sun is setting in glory; his last rays are shining on the snow, which covers the face of the country: the storm is over, and I must return to my dungeon. Adieu!— Is Albert with you? and what is he to you? God forgive the question.

FEBRUARY 8.

For a week past we have had the most wretched weather: but this to me is a blessing; for, during my residence here, not a single fine day has beamed from the heavens, but has been lost to me by the intrusion of somebody. During the severity of rain, sleet, frost, and storm, I congratulate myself that it cannot be worse indoors than abroad, nor worse abroad than it is within doors; and so I become reconciled. When the sun rises bright in the morning, and promises a glorious day, I never omit to exclaim, "There, now, they have another blessing from Heaven, which they will be sure to destroy: they spoil everything, — health, fame, happiness, amusement; and they do this generally through folly, ignorance, or imbecility, and always, according to their own account, with the best intentions!" I could often beseech them, on my bended knees, to be less resolved upon their own destruction.

FEBRUARY 17.

I fear that my ambassador and I shall not continue much longer together. He is really growing past endurance. He transacts his business in so ridiculous a manner, that I am often compelled to contradict him, and do things my own way; and then, of course, he thinks them very ill done. He complained of me lately on this account at court; and the minister gave

me a reprimand, — a gentle one it is true, but still a reprimand. In consequence of this, I was about to tender my resignation, when I received a letter, to which I submitted with great respect, on account of the high, noble, and generous spirit which dictated it. He endeavoured to soothe my excessive sensibility, paid a tribute to my extreme ideas of duty, of good example, and of perseverance in business, as the fruit of my youthful ardour, — an impulse which he did not seek to destroy, but only to moderate, that it might have proper play and be productive of good. So now I am at rest for another week, and no longer at variance with myself. Content and peace of mind are valuable things: I could wish, my dear friend, that these precious jewels were less transitory.

FEBRUARY 20.

God bless you, my dear friends, and may he grant you that happiness which he denies to me!

I thank you, Albert, for having deceived me. I waited for the news that your wedding-day was fixed; and I intended on that day, with solemnity, to take down Charlotte's profile from the wall, and to bury it with some other papers I possess. You are now united, and her picture still remains here. Well, let it remain! Why should it not? I know that I am still one of your society, that I still occupy a place uninjured in Charlotte's heart, that I hold the second place therein; and I intend to keep it. Oh, I should become mad if she could forget! — Albert, that thought is hell! Farewell, Albert — farewell, angel of heaven — farewell, Charlotte!

MARCH 15.

I have just had a sad adventure, which will drive me away from here. I lose all patience! — Death! — It is not to be remedied; and you alone are to blame,

for you urged and impelled me to fill a post for which I was by no means suited. I have now reason to be satisfied, and so have you! But, that you may not again attribute this fatality to my impetuous temper, I send you, my dear sir, a plain and simple narration of the affair, as a mere chronicler of facts would describe it.

The Count of O—— likes and distinguishes me. It is well known, and I have mentioned this to you a hundred times. Yesterday I dined with him. It is the day on which the nobility are accustomed to assemble at his house in the evening. I never once thought of the assembly, nor that we subalterns did not belong to such society. Well, I dined with the count; and, after dinner, we adjourned to the large hall. We walked up and down together: and I conversed with him, and with Colonel B——, who joined us; and in this manner the hour for the assembly approached. God knows, I was thinking of nothing, when who should enter but the honourable Lady S——, accompanied by her noble husband and their silly, scheming daughter, with her small waist and flat neck; and, with disdainful looks and a haughty air, they passed me by. As I heartily detest the whole race, I determined upon going away; and only waited till the count had disengaged himself from their impertinent prattle, to take leave, when the agreeable Miss B—— came in. As I never meet her without experiencing a heartfelt pleasure, I stayed and talked to her, leaning over the back of her chair, and did not perceive, till after some time, that she seemed a little confused, and ceased to answer me with her usual ease of manner. I was struck with it. "Heavens!" I said to myself, "can she, too, be like the rest?" I felt annoyed, and was about to withdraw; but I remained, notwithstanding, forming excuses for her conduct, fancying she did not mean it, and still hoping to receive some friendly recognition. The rest of the

company now arrived. There was the Baron F——, in an entire suit that dated from the coronation of Francis I.; the Chancellor N——, with his deaf wife; the shabbily-dressed I——, whose old-fashioned coat bore evidence of modern repairs: this crowned the whole. I conversed with some of my acquaintances, but they answered me laconically. I was engaged in observing Miss B——, and did not notice that the women were whispering at the end of the room, that the murmur extended by degrees to the men, that Madame S—— addressed the count with much warmth (this was all related to me subsequently by Miss B——); till at length the count came up to me, and took me to the window. "You know our ridiculous customs," he said. "I perceive the company is rather displeased at your being here. I would not on any account—" "I beg your Excellency's pardon!" I exclaimed. "I ought to have thought of this before, but I know you will forgive this little inattention. I was going," I added, "some time ago, but my evil genius detained me." And I smiled and bowed, to take my leave. He shook me by the hand, in a manner which expressed everything. I hastened at once from the illustrious assembly, sprang into a carriage, and drove to M——. I contemplated the setting sun from the top of the hill, and read that beautiful passage in Homer, where Ulysses is entertained by the hospitable herdsmen. This was indeed delightful.

I returned home to supper in the evening. But few persons were assembled in the room. They had turned up a corner of the table-cloth, and were playing at dice. The good-natured A—— came in. He laid down his hat when he saw me, approached me, and said in a low tone, "You have met with a disagreeable adventure." "I!" I exclaimed. "The count obliged you to withdraw from the assembly!" "Deuce take the assembly!" said I. "I was very glad to be gone."

"I am delighted," he added, "that you take it so lightly. I am only sorry that it is already so much spoken of." The circumstance then began to pain me. I fancied that every one who sat down, and even looked at me, was thinking of this incident; and my heart became embittered.

And now I could plunge a dagger into my bosom, when I hear myself everywhere pitied, and observe the triumph of my enemies, who say that this is always the case with vain persons, whose heads are turned with conceit, who affect to despise forms and such petty, idle nonsense.

Say what you will of fortitude, but show me the man who can patiently endure the laughter of fools, when they have obtained an advantage over him. 'Tis only when their nonsense is without foundation that one can suffer it without complaint.

MARCH 16.

Everything conspires against me. I met Miss B—— walking to-day. I could not help joining her; and, when we were at a little distance from her companions, I expressed my sense of her altered manner toward me. "O Werther!" she said, in a tone of emotion, "you, who know my heart, how could you so ill interpret my distress? What did I not suffer for you, from the moment you entered the room! I foresaw it all, — a hundred times was I on the point of mentioning it to you. I knew that the S——s and T——s, with their husbands, would quit the room, rather than remain in your company. I knew that the count would not break with them: and now so much is said about it." "How!" I exclaimed, and endeavoured to conceal my emotion; for all that Adelin had mentioned to me yesterday recurred to me painfully at that moment. "Oh, how much it has already cost me!" said this amiable girl, while her eyes filled

with tears. I could scarcely contain myself, and was ready to throw myself at her feet. "Explain yourself!" I cried. Tears flowed down her cheeks. I became quite frantic. She wiped them away, without attempting to conceal them. "You know my aunt," she continued; "she was present: and in what light does she consider the affair! Last night, and this morning, Werther, I was compelled to listen to a lecture upon my acquaintance with you. I have been obliged to hear you condemned and depreciated; and I could not — I dared not — say much in your defence."

Every word she uttered was a dagger to my heart. She did not feel what a mercy it would have been to conceal everything from me. She told me, in addition, all the impertinence that would be further circulated, and how the malicious would triumph; how they would rejoice over the punishment of my pride, over my humiliation for that want of esteem for others with which I had often been reproached. To hear all this, Wilhelm, uttered by her in a voice of the most sincere sympathy, awakened all my passions; and I am still in a state of extreme excitement. I wish I could find a man to jeer me about this event. I would sacrifice him to my resentment. The sight of his blood might possibly be a relief to my fury. A hundred times have I seized a dagger, to give ease to this oppressed heart. Naturalists tell of a noble race of horses that instinctively open a vein with their teeth, when heated and exhausted by a long course, in order to breathe more freely. I am often tempted to open a vein, to procure for myself everlasting liberty.

MARCH 24.

I have tendered my resignation to the court. I hope it will be accepted, and you will forgive me for not having previously consulted you. It is necessary I should leave this place. I know all you will urge me

to stay, and therefore — I beg you will soften this news to my mother. I am unable to do anything for myself: how, then, should I be competent to assist others? It will afflict her that I should have interrupted that career which would have made me first a privy councillor, and then minister, and that I should look behind me, in place of advancing. Argue as you will, combine all the reasons which should have induced me to remain, — I am going: that is sufficient. But, that you may not be ignorant of my destination, I may mention that the Prince of ——— is here. He is much pleased with my company; and, having heard of my intention to resign, he has invited me to his country house, to pass the spring months with him. I shall be left completely my own master; and, as we agree on all subjects but one, I shall try my fortune, and accompany him.

APRIL 19.

Thanks for both your letters. I delayed my reply, and withheld this letter, till I should obtain an answer from the court. I feared my mother might apply to the minister to defeat my purpose. But my request is granted, my resignation is accepted. I shall not recount with what reluctance it was accorded, nor relate what the minister has written: you would only renew your lamentations. The crown prince has sent me a present of five and twenty ducats; and, indeed, such goodness has affected me to tears. For this reason I shall not require from my mother the money for which I lately applied.

MAY 5.

I leave this place to-morrow; and, as my native place is only six miles from the high road, I intend to visit it once more, and recall the happy dreams of my childhood. I shall enter at the same gate through

which I came with my mother, when, after my father's death, she left that delightful retreat to immure herself in your melancholy town. Adieu, my dear friend: you shall hear of my future career.

MAY 9.

I have paid my visit to my native place with all the devotion of a pilgrim, and have experienced many unexpected emotions. Near the great elm-tree, which is a quarter of a league from the village, I got out of the carriage, and sent it on before, that alone, and on foot, I might enjoy vividly and heartily all the pleasure of my recollections. I stood there under that same elm which was formerly the term and object of my walks. How things have since changed! Then, in happy ignorance, I sighed for a world I did not know, where I hoped to find every pleasure and enjoyment which my heart could desire; and now, on my return from that wide world, O my friend, how many disappointed hopes and unsuccessful plans have I brought back!

As I contemplated the mountains which lay stretched out before me, I thought how often they had been the object of my dearest desires. Here used I to sit for hours together with my eyes bent upon them, ardently longing to wander in the shade of those woods, to lose myself in those valleys, which form so delightful an object in the distance. With what reluctance did I leave this charming spot, when my hour of recreation was over, and my leave of absence expired! I drew near to the village: all the well-known old summer-houses and gardens were recognised again; I disliked the new ones, and all other alterations which had taken place. I entered the village, and all my former feelings returned. I cannot, my dear friend, enter into details, charming as were my sensations: they would be dull in the narration. I had intended to lodge in the market-place, near our old house. As soon as I

entered, I perceived that the schoolroom, where our childhood had been taught by that good old woman, was converted into a shop. I called to mind the sorrow, the heaviness, the tears, and oppression of heart, which I experienced in that confinement. Every step produced some particular impression. A pilgrim in the Holy Land does not meet so many spots pregnant with tender recollections, and his soul is hardly moved with greater devotion. One incident will serve for illustration. I followed the course of a stream to a farm, formerly a delightful walk of mine, and paused at the spot, where, when boys, we used to amuse ourselves making ducks and drakes upon the water. I recollected so well how I used formerly to watch the course of that same stream, following it with inquiring eagerness, forming romantic ideas of the countries it was to pass through; but my imagination was soon exhausted: while the water continued flowing farther and farther on, till my fancy became bewildered by the contemplation of an invisible distance. Exactly such, my dear friend, so happy and so confined, were the thoughts of our good ancestors. Their feelings and their poetry were fresh as childhood. And, when Ulysses talks of the immeasurable sea and boundless earth, his epithets are true, natural, deeply felt, and mysterious. Of what importance is it that I have learned, with every schoolboy, that the world is round? Man needs but little earth for enjoyment, and still less for his final repose.

I am at present with the prince at his hunting-lodge. He is a man with whom one can live happily. He is honest and unaffected. There are, however, some strange characters about him, whom I cannot at all understand. They do not seem vicious, and yet they do not carry the appearance of thoroughly honest men. Sometimes I am disposed to believe them honest, and yet I cannot persuade myself to confide in them. It grieves me to hear the prince occasionally

talk of things which he has only read or heard of, and always with the same view in which they have been represented by others.

He values my understanding and talents more highly than my heart, but I am proud of the latter only. It is the sole source of everything, — of our strength, happiness, and misery. All the knowledge I possess every one else can acquire, but my heart is exclusively my own.

MAY 25.

I have had a plan in my head of which I did not intend to speak to you until it was accomplished: now that it has failed, I may as well mention it. I wished to enter the army, and had long been desirous of taking the step. This, indeed, was the chief reason for my coming here with the prince, as he is a general in the ——— service. I communicated my design to him during one of our walks together. He disapproved of it, and it would have been actual madness not to have listened to his reasons.

JUNE 11.

Say what you will, I can remain here no longer. Why should I remain? Time hangs heavy upon my hands. The prince is as gracious to me as any one could be, and yet I am not at my ease. There is, indeed, nothing in common between us. He is a man of understanding, but quite of the ordinary kind. His conversation affords me no more amusement than I should derive from the perusal of a well-written book. I shall remain here a week longer, and then start again on my travels. My drawings are the best things I have done since I came here. The prince has a taste for the arts, and would improve if his mind were not fettered by cold rules and mere technical ideas. I often lose patience, when, with a glowing imagination,

I am giving expression to art and nature, he interferes with learned suggestions, and uses at random the technical phraseology of artists.

JULY 16.

Once more I am a wanderer, a pilgrim, through the world. But what else are you!

JULY 18.

Whither am I going? I will tell you in confidence. I am obliged to continue a fortnight longer here, and then I think it would be better for me to visit the mines in ———. But I am only deluding myself thus. The fact is, I wish to be near Charlotte again, — that is all. I smile at the suggestions of my heart, and obey its dictates.

JULY 29.

No, no! it is yet well — all is well! I her husband! O God, who gave me being, if thou hadst destined this happiness for me, my whole life would have been one continual thanksgiving! But I will not murmur — forgive these tears, forgive these fruitless wishes. She — my wife! Oh, the very thought of folding that dearest of Heaven's creatures in my arms! Dear Wilhelm, my whole frame feels convulsed when I see Albert put his arms around her slender waist!

And shall I avow it? Why should I not, Wilhelm? She would have been happier with me than with him. Albert is not the man to satisfy the wishes of such a heart. He wants a certain sensibility; he wants — in short, their hearts do not beat in unison. How often, my dear friend, in reading a passage from some interesting book, when my heart and Charlotte's seemed to meet, and in a hundred other instances when our sentiments were unfolded by the story of some fictitious character, have I felt that we

were made for each other! But, dear Wilhelm, he loves her with his whole soul; and what does not such a love deserve?

I have been interrupted by an insufferable visit. I have dried my tears, and composed my thoughts. Adieu, my best friend!

AUGUST 4.

I am not alone unfortunate. All men are disappointed in their hopes, and deceived in their expectations. I have paid a visit to my good old woman under the lime-trees. The eldest boy ran out to meet me: his exclamation of joy brought out his mother, but she had a very melancholy look. Her first word was, "Alas! dear sir, my little John is dead." He was the youngest of her children. I was silent. "And my husband has returned from Switzerland without any money; and, if some kind people had not assisted him, he must have begged his way home. He was taken ill with fever on his journey." I could answer nothing, but made the little one a present. She invited me to take some fruit: I complied, and left the place with a sorrowful heart.

AUGUST 21.

My sensations are constantly changing. Sometimes a happy prospect opens before me; but alas! it is only for a moment; and then, when I am lost in reverie, I cannot help saying to myself, "If Albert were to die? — Yes, she would become — and I should be" — and so I pursue a chimera, till it leads me to the edge of a precipice at which I shudder.

When I pass through the same gate, and walk along the same road which first conducted me to Charlotte, my heart sinks within me at the change that has since taken place. All, all, is altered! No sentiment, no pulsation of my heart, is the same. My sensations are

such as would occur to some departed prince whose spirit should return to visit the superb palace which he had built in happy times, adorned with costly magnificence, and left to a beloved son, but whose glory he should find departed, and its halls deserted and in ruins.

SEPTEMBER 3.

I sometimes cannot understand how she can love another, how she dares love another, when I love nothing in this world so completely, so devotedly, as I love her, when I know only her, and have no other possession.

SEPTEMBER 4.

It is even so! As nature puts on her autumn tints, it becomes autumn with me and around me. My leaves are sere and yellow, and the neighbouring trees are divested of their foliage. Do you remember my writing to you about a peasant boy shortly after my arrival here? I have just made inquiries about him in Walheim. They say he has been dismissed from his service, and is now avoided by every one. I met him yesterday on the road, going to a neighbouring village. I spoke to him, and he told me his story. It interested me exceedingly, as you will easily understand when I repeat it to you. But why should I trouble you? Why should I not reserve all my sorrow for myself? Why should I continue to give you occasion to pity and blame me? But no matter: this also is part of my destiny.

At first the peasant lad answered my inquiries with a sort of subdued melancholy, which seemed to me the mark of a timid disposition; but, as we grew to understand each other, he spoke with less reserve, and openly confessed his faults, and lamented his misfortune. I wish, my dear friend, I could give proper expression to

his language. He told me with a sort of pleasurable recollection, that, after my departure, his passion for his mistress increased daily, until at last he neither knew what he did nor what he said, nor what was to become of him. He could neither eat nor drink nor sleep: he felt a sense of suffocation; he disobeyed all orders, and forgot all commands involuntarily; he seemed as if pursued by an evil spirit, till one day, knowing that his mistress had gone to an upper chamber, he had followed, or, rather, been drawn after her. As she proved deaf to his entreaties, he had recourse to violence. He knows not what happened; but he called God to witness that his intentions to her were honourable, and that he desired nothing more sincerely than that they should marry, and pass their lives together. When he had come to this point, he began to hesitate, as if there was something which he had not courage to utter, till at length he acknowledged with some confusion certain little confidences she had encouraged, and liberties she had allowed. He broke off two or three times in his narration, and assured me most earnestly that he had no wish to make her bad, as he termed it, for he loved her still as sincerely as ever; that the tale had never before escaped his lips, and was only now told to convince me that he was not utterly lost and abandoned. And here, my dear friend, I must commence the old song which you know I utter eternally. If I could only represent the man as he stood, and stands now before me, — could I only give his true expressions, you would feel compelled to sympathise in his fate. But enough: you, who know my misfortune and my disposition, can easily comprehend the attraction which draws me toward every unfortunate being, but particularly toward him whose story I have recounted.

On perusing this letter a second time, I find I have omitted the conclusion of my tale; but it is easily

supplied. She became reserved toward him, at the instigation of her brother who had long hated him, and desired his expulsion from the house, fearing that his sister's second marriage might deprive his children of the handsome fortune they expected from her; as she is childless. He was dismissed at length; and the whole affair occasioned so much scandal, that the mistress dared not take him back, even if she had wished it. She has since hired another servant, with whom, they say, her brother is equally displeased, and whom she is likely to marry; but my informant assures me that he himself is determined not to survive such a catastrophe.

This story is neither exaggerated nor embellished: indeed, I have weakened and impaired it in the narration, by the necessity of using the more refined expressions of society.

This love, then, this constancy, this passion, is no poetical fiction. It is actual, and dwells in its greatest purity amongst that class of mankind whom we term rude, uneducated. We are the educated, not the perverted! But read this story with attention, I implore you. I am tranquil to-day, for I have been employed upon this narration: you see by my writing that I am not so agitated as usual. Read and re-read this tale, Wilhelm: it is the history of your friend! My fortune has been and will be similar; and I am neither half so brave nor half so determined as the poor wretch with whom I hesitate to compare myself.

SEPTEMBER 5.

Charlotte had written a letter to her husband in the country, where he was detained by business. It commenced, "My dearest love, return as soon as possible: I await you with a thousand raptures." A friend who arrived, brought word, that, for certain reasons, he could not return immediately. Charlotte's letter was

not forwarded, and the same evening it fell into my hands. I read it, and smiled. She asked the reason. "What a heavenly treasure is imagination!" I exclaimed; "I fancied for a moment that this was written to me." She paused, and seemed displeased. I was silent.

SEPTEMBER 6.

It cost me much to part with the blue coat which I wore the first time I danced with Charlotte. But I could not possibly wear it any longer. But I have ordered a new one, precisely similar, even to the collar and sleeves, as well as a new waistcoat and pantaloons.

But it does not produce the same effect upon me. I know not how it is, but I hope in time I shall like it better.

SEPTEMBER 12.

She has been absent for some days. She went to meet Albert. To-day I visited her: she rose to receive me, and I kissed her hand most tenderly.

A canary at the moment flew from a mirror, and settled upon her shoulder. "Here is a new friend," she observed, while she made him perch upon her hand: "he is a present for the children. What a dear he is! Look at him! When I feed him, he flutters with his wings, and pecks so nicely. He kisses me, too, — only look!"

She held the bird to her mouth; and he pressed her sweet lips with so much fervour that he seemed to feel the excess of bliss which he enjoyed.

"He shall kiss you too," she added; and then she held the bird toward me. His little beak moved from her mouth to mine, and the delightful sensation seemed like the forerunner of the sweetest bliss.

"A kiss," I observed, "does not seem to satisfy him: he wishes for food, and seems disappointed by these unsatisfactory endearments."

"But he eats out of my mouth," she continued, and extended her lips to him containing seed; and she smiled with all the charm of a being who has allowed an innocent participation of her love.

I turned my face away. She should not act thus. She ought not to excite my imagination with such displays of heavenly innocence and happiness, nor awaken my heart from its slumbers, in which it dreams of the worthlessness of life! And why not? Because she knows how much I love her.

SEPTEMBER 15.

It makes me wretched, Wilhelm, to think that there should be men incapable of appreciating the few things which possess a real value in life. You remember the walnut-trees at S——, under which I used to sit with Charlotte, during my visits to the worthy old vicar. Those glorious trees, the very sight of which has so often filled my heart with joy, how they adorned and refreshed the parsonage yard, with their wide-extended branches! and how pleasing was our remembrance of the good old pastor, by whose hands they were planted so many years ago! The schoolmaster has frequently mentioned his name. He had it from his grandfather. He must have been a most excellent man; and, under the shade of those old trees, his memory was ever venerated by me. The schoolmaster informed us yesterday, with tears in his eyes, that those trees had been felled. Yes, cut to the ground! I could, in my wrath, have slain the monster who struck the first stroke. And I must endure this! — I, who, if I had had two such trees in my own court, and one had died from old age, should have wept with real affliction. But

there is some comfort left, — such a thing is sentiment, — the whole village murmurs at the misfortune; and I hope the vicar's wife will soon find, by the cessation of the villagers' presents, how much she has wounded the feelings of the neighbourhood. It was she who did it, — the wife of the present incumbent (our good old man is dead), — a tall, sickly creature, who is so far right to disregard the world, as the world totally disregards her. The silly being affects to be learned, pretends to examine the canonical books, lends her aid toward the new-fashioned reformation of Christendom, moral and critical, and shrugs up her shoulders at the mention of Lavater's enthusiasm. Her health is destroyed, on account of which she is prevented from having any enjoyment here below. Only such a creature could have cut down my walnut-trees! I can never pardon it. Hear her reasons. The falling leaves made the court wet and dirty; the branches obstructed the light; boys threw stones at the nuts when they were ripe, and the noise affected her nerves, and disturbed her profound meditations, when she was weighing the difficulties of Kennicot, Semler, and Michaelis. Finding that all the parish, particularly the old people, were displeased, I asked "why they allowed it?" "Ah, sir!" they replied, "when the steward orders, what can we poor peasants do?" But one thing has happened well. The steward and the vicar (who, for once, thought to reap some advantage from the caprices of his wife) intended to divide the trees between them. The revenue-office, being informed of it, revived an old claim to the ground where the trees had stood, and sold them to the best bidder. There they still lie on the ground. If I were the sovereign, I should know how to deal with them all, — vicar, steward, and revenue-office. Sovereign, did I say? I should, in that case, care little about the trees that grew in the country.

October 10.

Only to gaze upon her dark eyes is to me a source of happiness! And what grieves me, is, that Albert does not seem so happy as he — hoped to be — as I should have been — if — I am no friend to these pauses, but here I cannot express it otherwise; and probably I am explicit enough.

October 12.

Ossian has superseded Homer in my heart. To what a world does the illustrious bard carry me! To wander over pathless wilds, surrounded by impetuous whirlwinds, where, by the feeble light of the moon, we see the spirits of our ancestors; to hear from the mountain-tops, mid the roar of torrents, their plaintive sounds issuing from deep caverns, and the sorrowful lamentations of a maiden who sighs and expires on the mossy tomb of the warrior by whom she was adored. I meet this bard with silver hair; he wanders in the valley; he seeks the footsteps of his fathers, and, alas! he finds only their tombs. Then, contemplating the pale moon, as she sinks beneath the waves of the rolling sea, the memory of bygone days strikes the mind of the hero, — days when approaching danger invigorated the brave, and the moon shone upon his bark laden with spoils, and returning in triumph. When I read in his countenance deep sorrow, when I see his dying glory sink exhausted into the grave, as he inhales new and heart-thrilling delight from his approaching union with his beloved, and he casts a look on the cold earth and the tall grass which is so soon to cover him, and then exclaims, "The traveller will come, — he will come who has seen my beauty, and he will ask, 'Where is the bard, — where is the illustrious son of Fingal?' He will walk over my tomb, and will seek me in vain!" Then, O my friend, I could instantly, like a true and noble knight, draw

my sword, and deliver my prince from the long and painful languor of a living death, and dismiss my own soul to follow the demigod whom my hand had set free!

October 19.

Alas! the void — the fearful void, which I feel in my bosom! Sometimes I think, if I could only once — but once, press her to my heart, this dreadful void would be filled.

October 26.

Yes, I feel certain, Wilhelm, and every day I become more certain, that the existence of any being whatever is of very little consequence. A friend of Charlotte's called to see her just now. I withdrew into a neighbouring apartment, and took up a book; but, finding I could not read, I sat down to write. I heard them converse in an undertone: they spoke upon indifferent topics, and retailed the news of the town. One was going to be married; another was ill, very ill, — she had a dry cough, her face was growing thinner daily, and she had occasional fits. "N—— is very unwell too," said Charlotte. "His limbs begin to swell already," answered the other; and my lively imagination carried me at once to the beds of the infirm. There I see them struggling against death, with all the agonies of pain and horror; and these women, Wilhelm, talk of all this with as much indifference as one would mention the death of a stranger. And when I look around the apartment where I now am, — when I see Charlotte's apparel lying before me, and Albert's writings, and all those articles of furniture which are so familiar to me, even to the very inkstand which I am using, — when I think what I am to this family — everything. My friends esteem me; I often contribute to their happiness, and my heart seems as

if it could not beat without them; and yet — if I were to die, if I were to be summoned from the midst of this circle, would they feel — or how long would they feel — the void which my loss would make in their existence? How long! Yes, such is the frailty of man, that even there, where he has the greatest consciousness of his own being, where he makes the strongest and most forcible impression, even in the memory, in the heart, of his beloved, there also he must perish, — vanish, — and that quickly.

October 27.

I could tear open my bosom with vexation to think how little we are capable of influencing the feelings of each other. No one can communicate to me those sensations of love, joy, rapture, and delight which I do not naturally possess; and, though my heart may glow with the most lively affection, I cannot make the happiness of one in whom the same warmth is not inherent.

October 27: Evening.

I possess so much, but my love for her absorbs it all. I possess so much, but without her I have nothing.

October 30.

One hundred times have I been on the point of embracing her. Heavens! what a torment it is to see so much loveliness passing and repassing before us, and yet not dare to lay hold of it! And laying hold is the most natural of human instincts. Do not children touch everything they see? And I!

November 3.

Witness, Heaven, how often I lie down in my bed with a wish, and even a hope, that I may never awaken again. And in the morning, when I open my

eyes, I behold the sun once more, and am wretched. If I were whimsical, I might blame the weather, or an acquaintance, or some personal disappointment, for my discontented mind; and then this insupportable load of trouble would not rest entirely upon myself. But, alas! I feel it too sadly. I am alone the cause of my own woe, am I not? Truly, my own bosom contains the source of all my sorrow, as it previously contained the source of all my pleasure. Am I not the same being who once enjoyed an excess of happiness, who, at every step, saw paradise open before him, and whose heart was ever expanded toward the whole world? And this heart is now dead, no sentiment can revive it; my eyes are dry; and my senses, no more refreshed by the influence of soft tears, wither and consume my brain. I suffer much, for I have lost the only charm of life: that active, sacred power which created worlds around me, — it is no more. When I look from my window at the distant hills, and behold the morning sun breaking through the mists, and illuminating the country around, which is still wrapped in silence, whilst the soft stream winds gently through the willows, which have shed their leaves; when glorious nature displays all her beauties before me, and her wondrous prospects are ineffectual to extract one tear of joy from my withered heart, — I feel that in such a moment I stand like a reprobate before heaven, hardened, insensible, and unmoved. Oftentimes do I then bend my knee to the earth, and implore God for the blessing of tears, as the desponding labourer in some scorching climate prays for the dews of heaven to moisten his parched corn.

But I feel that God does not grant sunshine or rain to our importunate entreaties. And oh, those bygone days, whose memory now torments me! why were they so fortunate? Because I then waited with patience for the blessings of the Eternal, and received

his gifts with the grateful feelings of a thankful heart.

NOVEMBER 8.

Charlotte has reproved me for my excesses, with so much tenderness and goodness! I have lately been in the habit of drinking more wine than heretofore. "Don't do it," she said. "Think of Charlotte!" "Think of you!" I answered; "need you bid me do so? Think of you — I do not think of you: you are ever before my soul! This very morning I sat on the spot where, a few days ago, you descended from the carriage, and — " She immediately changed the subject to prevent me from pursuing it farther. My dear friend, my energies are all prostrated: she can do with me what she pleases.

NOVEMBER 15.

I thank you, Wilhelm, for your cordial sympathy, for your excellent advice; and I implore you to be quiet. Leave me to my sufferings. In spite of my wretchedness, I have still strength enough for endurance. I revere religion — you know I do. I feel that it can impart strength to the feeble and comfort to the afflicted, but does it affect all men equally? Consider this vast universe: you will see thousands for whom it has never existed, thousands for whom it will never exist, whether it be preached to them, or not; and must it, then, necessarily exist for me? Does not the Son of God himself say that they are his whom the Father has given to him? Have I been given to him? What if the Father will retain me for himself, as my heart sometimes suggests? I pray you, do not misinterpret this. Do not extract derision from my harmless words. I pour out my whole soul before you. Silence were otherwise preferable to me, but I need not shrink from a subject of which few know more than I do myself. What is the destiny of

man, but to fill up the measure of his sufferings, and to drink his allotted cup of bitterness? And if that same cup proved bitter to the God of heaven, under a human form, why should I affect a foolish pride, and call it sweet? Why should I be ashamed of shrinking at that fearful moment, when my whole being will tremble between existence and annihilation, when a remembrance of the past, like a flash of lightning, will illuminate the dark gulf of futurity, when everything shall dissolve around me, and the whole world vanish away? Is not this the voice of a creature oppressed beyond all resource, self-deficient, about to plunge into inevitable destruction, and groaning deeply at its inadequate strength, "My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?" And should I feel ashamed to utter the same expression? Should I not shudder at a prospect which had its fears, even for him who folds up the heavens like a garment?

NOVEMBER 21.

She does not feel, she does not know, that she is preparing a poison which will destroy us both; and I drink deeply of the draught which is to prove my destruction. What mean those looks of kindness with which she often — often? no, not often, but sometimes, regards me, that complacency with which she hears the involuntary sentiments which frequently escape me, and the tender pity for my sufferings which appears in her countenance?

Yesterday, when I took leave, she seized me by the hand, and said, "Adieu, dear Werther." Dear Werther! It was the first time she ever called me dear: the sound sunk deep into my heart. I have repeated it a hundred times; and last night, on going to bed, and talking to myself of various things, I suddenly said, "Good night, dear Werther!" and then could not but laugh at myself.

NOVEMBER 22.

I cannot pray, "Leave her to me!" and yet she often seems to belong to me. I cannot pray, "Give her to me!" for she is another's. In this way I affect mirth over my troubles; and, if I had time, I could compose a whole litany of antitheses.

NOVEMBER 24.

She is sensible of my sufferings. This morning her look pierced my very soul. I found her alone, and she was silent: she steadfastly surveyed me. I no longer saw in her face the charms of beauty or the fire of genius: these had disappeared. But I was affected by an expression much more touching, a look of the deepest sympathy and of the softest pity. Why was I afraid to throw myself at her feet? Why did I not dare to take her in my arms, and answer her by a thousand kisses? She had recourse to her piano for relief, and in a low and sweet voice accompanied the music with delicious sounds. Her lips never appeared so lovely: they seemed but just to open, that they might imbibe the sweet tones which issued from the instrument, and return the heavenly vibration from her lovely mouth. Oh! who can express my sensations? I was quite overcome, and, bending down, pronounced this vow: "Beautiful lips, which the angels guard, never will I seek to profane your purity with a kiss." And yet, my friend, oh, I wish — but my heart is darkened by doubt and indecision — could I but taste felicity, and then die to expiate the sin! What sin?

NOVEMBER 26.

Oftentimes I say to myself, "Thou alone art wretched: all other mortals are happy, — none are distressed like thee!" Then I read a passage in an ancient poet, and I seem to understand my own heart.

I have so much to endure! Have men before me ever been so wretched?

NOVEMBER 30.

I shall never be myself again! Wherever I go, some fatality occurs to distract me. Even to-day — alas for our destiny! alas for human nature!

About dinner-time I went to walk by the river-side, for I had no appetite. Everything around seemed gloomy: a cold and damp easterly wind blew from the mountains, and black, heavy clouds spread over the plain. I observed at a distance a man in a tattered coat: he was wandering among the rocks, and seemed to be looking for plants. When I approached, he turned round at the noise; and I saw that he had an interesting countenance in which a settled melancholy, strongly marked by benevolence, formed the principal feature. His long black hair was divided, and flowed over his shoulders. As his garb betokened a person of the lower order, I thought he would not take it ill if I inquired about his business; and I therefore asked what he was seeking. He replied, with a deep sigh, that he was looking for flowers, and could find none. "But it is not the season," I observed, with a smile. "Oh, there are so many flowers!" he answered, as he came nearer to me. "In my garden there are roses and honeysuckles of two sorts: one sort was given to me by my father! they grow as plentifully as weeds; I have been looking for them these two days, and cannot find them. There are flowers out there, yellow, blue, and red; and that centaury has a very pretty blossom: but I can find none of them." I observed his peculiarity, and therefore asked him, with an air of indifference, what he intended to do with his flowers. A strange smile overspread his countenance. Holding his finger to his mouth, he expressed a hope that I would not betray him; and he then informed me that

he had promised to gather a nosegay for his mistress. "That is right," said I. "Oh!" he replied, "she possesses many other things as well: she is very rich." "And yet," I continued, "she likes your nosegays." "Oh, she has jewels and crowns!" he exclaimed. I asked who she was. "If the states-general would but pay me," he added, "I should be quite another man. Alas! there was a time when I was so happy; but that is past, and I am now —" He raised his swimming eyes to heaven. "And you were happy once?" I observed. "Ah, would I were so still!" was his reply. "I was then as gay and contented as a man can be." An old woman, who was coming toward us, now called out, "Henry, Henry! where are you? We have been looking for you everywhere: come to dinner." "Is he your son?" I inquired, as I went toward her. "Yes," she said: "he is my poor, unfortunate son. The Lord has sent me a heavy affliction." I asked whether he had been long in this state. She answered, "He has been as calm as he is at present for about six months. I thank Heaven that he has so far recovered: he was for one whole year quite raving, and chained down in a madhouse. Now he injures no one, but talks of nothing else than kings and queens. He used to be a very good, quiet youth, and helped to maintain me; he wrote a very fine hand; but all at once he became melancholy, was seized with a violent fever, grew distracted, and is now as you see. If I were only to tell you, sir —" I interrupted her by asking what period it was in which he boasted of having been so happy. "Poor boy!" she exclaimed, with a smile of compassion, "he means the time when he was completely deranged, — a time he never ceases to regret, — when he was in the madhouse, and unconscious of everything." I was thunderstruck: I placed a piece of money in her hand, and hastened away.

"You were happy!" I exclaimed, as I returned

quickly to the town, "'as gay and contented as a man can be!'" God of heaven! and is this the destiny of man? Is he only happy before he has acquired his reason, or after he has lost it? Unfortunate being! And yet I envy your fate: I envy the delusion to which you are a victim. You go forth with joy to gather flowers for your princess, — in winter, — and grieve when you can find none, and cannot understand why they do not grow. But I wander forth without joy, without hope, without design; and I return as I came. You fancy what a man you would be if the states-general paid you. Happy mortal, who can ascribe your wretchedness to an earthly cause! You do not know, you do not feel, that in your own distracted heart and disordered brain dwells the source of that unhappiness which all the potentates on earth cannot relieve.

Let that man die unconsoled who can deride the invalid for undertaking a journey to distant, healthful springs, — where he often finds only a heavier disease and a more painful death, — or who can exult over the despairing mind of a sinner, who, to obtain peace of conscience and an alleviation of misery, makes a pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre. Each laborious step which galls his wounded feet in rough and untrodden paths pours a drop of balm into his troubled soul, and the journey of many a weary day brings a nightly relief to his anguished heart. Will you dare call this enthusiasm, ye crowd of pompous declaimers? Enthusiasm! O God! thou seest my tears. Thou hast allotted us our portion of misery: must we also have brethren to persecute us, to deprive us of our consolation, of our trust in thee, and in thy love and mercy? For our trust in the virtue of the healing root, or in the strength of the vine, what is it else than a belief in thee from whom all that surrounds us derives its healing and restoring powers? Father, whom I know not,

"She was busying about her pump"

Photogravure from a painting by H. Kaulbach

— who wert once wont to fill my soul, but who now hidest thy face from me, — call me back to thee; be silent no longer; thy silence shall not delay a soul which thirsts after thee. What man, what father, could be angry with a son for returning to him suddenly, for falling on his neck, and exclaiming, "I am here again, my father! forgive me if I have anticipated my journey, and returned before the appointed time! The world is everywhere the same, — a scene of labour and pain, of pleasure and reward; but what does it all avail? I am happy only where thou art, and in thy presence am I content to suffer or enjoy." And wouldst thou, heavenly Father, banish such a child from thy presence?

DECEMBER 1.

Wilhelm, the man about whom I wrote to you — that man so enviable in his misfortunes — was secretary to Charlotte's father; and an unhappy passion for her which he cherished, concealed, and at length discovered, caused him to be dismissed from his situation. This made him mad. Think, whilst you peruse this plain narration, what an impression the circumstance has made upon me! But it was related to me by Albert with as much calmness as you will probably peruse it.

DECEMBER 4.

I implore your attention. It is all over with me. I can support this state no longer. To-day I was sitting by Charlotte. She was playing upon her piano a succession of delightful melodies, with such intense expression! Her little sister was dressing her doll upon my lap. The tears came into my eyes. I leaned down, and looked intently at her wedding-ring: my tears fell — immediately she began to play that favourite, that divine, air which has so often enchanted

me. I felt comfort from a recollection of the past, of those bygone days when that air was familiar to me; and then I recalled all the sorrows and the disappointments which I had since endured. I paced with hasty strides through the room, my heart became convulsed with painful emotions. At length I went up to her, and exclaimed with eagerness, "For Heaven's sake, play that air no longer!" She stopped, and looked steadfastly at me. She then said, with a smile which sunk deep into my heart, "Werther, you are ill: your dearest food is distasteful to you. But go, I entreat you, and endeavour to compose yourself." I tore myself away. God, thou seest my torments, and wilt end them!

DECEMBER 6.

How her image haunts me! Waking or asleep, she fills my entire soul! Soon as I close my eyes, here, in my brain, where all the nerves of vision are concentrated, her dark eyes are imprinted. Here — I do not know how to describe it; but, if I shut my eyes, hers are immediately before me: dark as an abyss they open upon me, and absorb my senses.

And what is man — that boasted demigod? Do not his powers fail when he most requires their use? And whether he soar in joy, or sink in sorrow, is not his career in both inevitably arrested? And, whilst he fondly dreams that he is grasping at infinity, does he not feel compelled to return to a consciousness of his cold, monotonous existence?

THE EDITOR TO THE READER.

It is a matter of extreme regret that we want original evidence of the last remarkable days of our friend; and we are, therefore, obliged to interrupt the progress of his correspondence, and to supply the deficiency by a connected narration.

I have felt it my duty to collect accurate information from the mouths of persons well acquainted with his history. The story is simple; and all the accounts agree, except in some unimportant particulars. It is true, that, with respect to the characters of the persons spoken of, opinions and judgments vary.

We have only, then, to relate conscientiously the facts which our diligent labour has enabled us to collect, to give the letters of the deceased, and to pay particular attention to the slightest fragment from his pen, more especially as it is so difficult to discover the real and correct motives of men who are not of the common order.

Sorrow and discontent had taken deep root in Werther's soul, and gradually imparted their character to his whole being. The harmony of his mind became completely disturbed; a perpetual excitement and mental irritation, which weakened his natural powers, produced the saddest effects upon him, and rendered him at length the victim of an exhaustion against which he struggled with still more painful efforts than he had displayed, even in contending with his other misfortunes. His mental anxiety weakened his various good qualities; and he was soon converted into a gloomy companion, — always unhappy and unjust in his ideas, the more

wretched he became. This was, at least, the opinion of Albert's friends. They assert, moreover, that the character of Albert himself had undergone no change in the meantime: he was still the same being whom Werther had loved, honoured, and respected from the commencement. His love for Charlotte was unbounded: he was proud of her, and desired that she should be recognised by every one as the noblest of created beings. Was he, however, to blame for wishing to avert from her every appearance of suspicion? or for his unwillingness to share his rich prize with another, even for a moment, and in the most innocent manner? It is asserted that Albert frequently retired from his wife's apartment during Werther's visits; but this did not arise from hatred or aversion to his friend, but only from a feeling that his presence was oppressive to Werther.

Charlotte's father, who was confined to the house by indisposition, was accustomed to send his carriage for her, that she might make excursions in the neighbourhood. One day the weather had been unusually severe, and the whole country was covered with snow.

Werther went for Charlotte the following morning, in order that, if Albert were absent, he might conduct her home.

The beautiful weather produced but little impression on his troubled spirit. A heavy weight lay upon his soul, deep melancholy had taken possession of him, and his mind knew no change save from one painful thought to another.

As he now never enjoyed internal peace, the condition of his fellow creatures was to him a perpetual source of trouble and distress. He believed he had disturbed the happiness of Albert and his wife; and, whilst he censured himself strongly for this, he began to entertain a secret dislike to Albert.

His thoughts were occasionally directed to this point.

"Yes," he would repeat to himself, with ill-concealed dissatisfaction, "yes, this is, after all, the extent of that confiding, dear, tender, and sympathetic love, that calm and eternal fidelity! What do I behold but satiety and indifference? Does not every frivolous engagement attract him more than his charming and lovely wife? Does he know how to prize his happiness? Can he value her as she deserves? He possesses her, it is true, — I know that, as I know much more, — and I have become accustomed to the thought that he will drive me mad, or, perhaps, murder me. Is his friendship toward me unimpaired? Does he not view my attachment to Charlotte as an infringement upon his rights, and consider my attention to her as a silent rebuke to himself? I know, and indeed feel, that he dislikes me, — that he wishes for my absence, — that my presence is hateful to him."

He would often pause when on his way to visit Charlotte, stand still, as though in doubt, and seem desirous of returning, but would nevertheless proceed; and, engaged in such thoughts and soliloquies as we have described, he finally reached the hunting-lodge, with a sort of involuntary consent.

Upon one occasion he entered the house; and, inquiring for Charlotte, he observed that the inmates were in a state of unusual confusion. The eldest boy informed him that a dreadful misfortune had occurred at Walheim, — that a peasant had been murdered! But this made little impression upon him. Entering the apartment, he found Charlotte engaged reasoning with her father, who, in spite of his infirmity, insisted on going to the scene of the crime, in order to institute an inquiry. The criminal was unknown; the victim had been found dead at his own door that morning. Suspicions were excited: the murdered man had been in the service of a widow, and the person who had

previously filled the situation had been dismissed from her employment.

As soon as Werther heard this, he exclaimed with great excitement, "Is it possible! I must go to the spot—I cannot delay a moment!" He hastened to Walheim. Every incident returned vividly to his remembrance; and he entertained not the slightest doubt that that man was the murderer to whom he had so often spoken, and for whom he entertained so much regard. His way took him past the well-known lime-trees, to the house where the body had been carried; and his feelings were greatly excited at the sight of the fondly recollected spot. That threshold where the neighbours' children had so often played together was stained with blood; love and attachment, the noblest feelings of human nature, had been converted into violence and murder. The huge trees stood there leafless and covered with hoarfrost; the beautiful hedgerows which surrounded the old churchyard wall were withered; and the gravestones, half covered with snow, were visible through the openings.

As he approached the inn, in front of which the whole village was assembled, screams were suddenly heard. A troop of armed peasants was seen approaching, and every one exclaimed that the criminal had been apprehended. Werther looked, and was not long in doubt. The prisoner was no other than the servant, who had been formerly so attached to the widow, and whom he had met prowling about, with that suppressed anger and ill-concealed despair, which we have before described.

"What have you done, unfortunate man?" inquired Werther, as he advanced toward the prisoner. The latter turned his eyes upon him in silence, and then replied with perfect composure, "No one will now marry her, and she will marry no one." The prisoner was taken in the inn, and Werther left the place.

The mind of Werther was fearfully excited by this shocking occurrence. He ceased, however, to be oppressed by his usual feeling of melancholy, moroseness, and indifference to everything that passed around him. He entertained a strong degree of pity for the prisoner, and was seized with an indescribable anxiety to save him from his impending fate. He considered him so unfortunate, he deemed his crime so excusable, and thought his own condition so nearly similar, that he felt convinced he could make every one else view the matter in the light in which he saw it himself. He now became anxious to undertake his defence, and commenced composing an eloquent speech for the occasion; and, on his way to the hunting-lodge, he could not refrain from speaking aloud the statement which he resolved to make to the judge.

Upon his arrival, he found Albert had been before him: and he was a little perplexed by this meeting; but he soon recovered himself, and expressed his opinion with much warmth to the judge. The latter shook his head doubtingly; and although Werther urged his case with the utmost zeal, feeling, and determination in defence of his client, yet, as we may easily suppose, the judge was not much influenced by his appeal. On the contrary, he interrupted him in his address, reasoned with him seriously, and even administered a rebuke to him for becoming the advocate of a murderer. He demonstrated, that, according to this precedent, every law might be violated, and the public security utterly destroyed. He added, moreover, that in such a case he could himself do nothing, without incurring the greatest responsibility; that everything must follow in the usual course, and pursue the ordinary channel.

Werther, however, did not abandon his enterprise, and even besought the judge to connive at the flight of the prisoner. But this proposal was peremptorily re-

jected. Albert, who had taken some part in the discussion, coincided in opinion with the judge. At this Werther became enraged, and took his leave in great anger, after the judge had more than once assured him that the prisoner could not be saved.

The excess of his grief at this assurance may be inferred from a note we have found amongst his papers, and which was doubtless written upon this very occasion.

"You cannot be saved, unfortunate man! I see clearly that we cannot be saved!"

Werther was highly incensed at the observations which Albert had made to the judge in this matter of the prisoner. He thought he could detect therein a little bitterness toward himself personally; and although, upon reflection, it could not escape his sound judgment that their view of the matter was correct, he felt the greatest possible reluctance to make such an admission.

A memorandum of Werther's upon this point, expressive of his general feelings toward Albert, has been found amongst his papers.

"What is the use of my continually repeating that he is a good and estimable man? He is an inward torment to me, and I am incapable of being just toward him."

One fine evening in winter, when the weather seemed inclined to thaw, Charlotte and Albert were returning home together. The former looked from time to time about her, as if she missed Werther's company. Albert began to speak of him, and censured him for his prejudices. He alluded to his unfortunate attachment, and

wished it were possible to discontinue his acquaintance. "I desire it on our own account," he added; "and I request you will compel him to alter his deportment toward you, and to visit you less frequently. The world is censorious, and I know that here and there we are spoken of." Charlotte made no reply, and Albert seemed to feel her silence. At least, from that time, he never again spoke of Werther; and, when she introduced the subject, he allowed the conversation to die away, or else he directed the discourse into another channel.

The vain attempt Werther had made to save the unhappy murderer was the last feeble glimmering of a flame about to be extinguished. He sank almost immediately afterward into a state of gloom and inactivity, until he was at length brought to perfect distraction by learning that he was to be summoned as a witness against the prisoner, who asserted his complete innocence.

His mind now became oppressed by the recollection of every misfortune of his past life. The mortification he had suffered at the ambassador's, and his subsequent troubles, were revived in his memory. He became utterly inactive. Destitute of energy, he was cut off from every pursuit and occupation which compose the business of common life; and he became a victim to his own susceptibility, and to his restless passion for the most amiable and beloved of women, whose peace he destroyed. In this unvarying monotony of existence his days were consumed; and his powers became exhausted without aim or design, until they brought him to a sorrowful end.

A few letters which he left behind, and which we here subjoin, afford the best proofs of his anxiety of mind and of the depth of his passion, as well as of his doubts and struggles, and of his weariness of life.

DECEMBER 12.

Dear Wilhelm, I am reduced to the condition of those unfortunate wretches who believe they are pursued by an evil spirit. Sometimes I am oppressed, not by apprehension or fear, but by an inexpressible internal sensation, which weighs upon my heart, and impedes my breath! Then I wander forth at night, even in this tempestuous season, and feel pleasure in surveying the dreadful scenes around me.

Yesterday evening I went forth. A rapid thaw had suddenly set in: I had been informed that the river had risen, that the brooks had all overflowed their banks, and that the whole vale of Walheim was under water! Upon the stroke of twelve I hastened forth. I beheld a fearful sight. The foaming torrents rolled from the mountains in the moonlight, — fields and meadows, trees and hedges, were confounded together; and the entire valley was converted into a deep lake, which was agitated by the roaring wind! And when the moon shone forth, and tinged the black clouds with silver, and the impetuous torrent at my feet foamed and resounded with awful and grand impetuosity, I was overcome by a mingled sensation of apprehension and delight. With extended arms I looked down into the yawning abyss, and cried, "Plunge!" For a moment my senses forsook me, in the intense delight of ending my sorrows and my sufferings by a plunge into that gulf! And then I felt as if I were rooted to the earth, and incapable of seeking an end to my woes! But my hour is not yet come: I feel it is not. O Wilhelm, how willingly could I abandon my existence to ride the whirlwind, or to embrace the torrent! and then might not rapture perchance be the portion of this liberated soul?

I turned my sorrowful eyes toward a favourite spot, where I was accustomed to sit with Charlotte beneath a willow after a fatiguing walk. Alas! it was covered

with water, and with difficulty I found even the meadow. And the fields around the hunting-lodge, thought I. Has our dear bower been destroyed by this unpitying storm? And a beam of past happiness streamed upon me, as the mind of a captive is illumined by dreams of flocks and herds and bygone joys of home! But I am free from blame. I have courage to die! Perhaps I have, — but I still sit here, like a wretched pauper, who collects fagots, and begs her bread from door to door, that she may prolong for a few days a miserable existence which she is unwilling to resign.

DECEMBER 15.

What is the matter with me, dear Wilhelm? I am afraid of myself! Is not my love for her of the purest, most holy, and most brotherly nature? Has my soul ever been sullied by a single sensual desire? but I will make no protestations. And now, ye nightly visions, how truly have those mortals understood you, who ascribe your various contradictory effects to some invincible power! This night — I tremble at the avowal — I held her in my arms, locked in a close embrace: I pressed her to my bosom, and covered with countless kisses those dear lips which murmured in reply soft protestations of love. My sight became confused by the delicious intoxication of her eyes. Heavens! is it sinful to revel again in such happiness, to recall once more those rapturous moments with intense delight? Charlotte! Charlotte! I am lost! My senses are bewildered, my recollection is confused, mine eyes are bathed in tears — I am ill; and yet I am well — I wish for nothing — I have no desires — it were better I were gone.

Under the circumstances narrated above, a determination to quit this world had now taken fixed possession of Werther's soul. Since Charlotte's return, this

thought had been the final object of all his hopes and wishes; but he had resolved that such a step should not be taken with precipitation, but with calmness and tranquillity, and with the most perfect deliberation.

His troubles and internal struggles may be understood from the following fragment, which was found, without any date, amongst his papers, and appears to have formed the beginning of a letter to Wilhelm.

"Her presence, her fate, her sympathy for me, have power still to extract tears from my withered brain.

"One lifts up the curtain, and passes to the other side, — that is all! And why all these doubts and delays? Because we know not what is behind — because there is no returning — and because our mind infers that all is darkness and confusion, where we have nothing but uncertainty."

His appearance at length became quite altered by the effect of his melancholy thoughts; and his resolution was now finally and irrevocably taken, of which the following ambiguous letter, which he addressed to his friend, may appear to afford some proof.

DECEMBER 20.

I am grateful to your love, Wilhelm, for having repeated your advice so seasonably. Yes, you are right: it is undoubtedly better that I should depart. But I do not entirely approve your scheme of returning at once to your neighbourhood; at least, I should like to make a little excursion on the way, particularly as we may now expect a continued frost, and consequently good roads. I am much pleased with your intention of coming to fetch me; only delay your journey for a fortnight, and wait for another letter from me. One should gather nothing before it is ripe, and a fortnight sooner or later makes a great

difference. Entreat my mother to pray for her son, and tell her I beg her pardon for all the unhappiness I have occasioned her. It has ever been my fate to give pain to those whose happiness I should have promoted. Adieu, my dearest friend. May every blessing of Heaven attend you! Farewell.

We find it difficult to express the emotions with which Charlotte's soul was agitated during the whole of this time, whether in relation to her husband or to her unfortunate friend; although we are enabled, by our knowledge of her character, to understand their nature.

It is certain that she had formed a determination, by every means in her power to keep Werther at a distance; and, if she hesitated in her decision, it was from a sincere feeling of friendly pity, knowing how much it would cost him, — indeed, that he would find it almost impossible to comply with her wishes. But various causes now urged her to be firm. Her husband preserved a strict silence about the whole matter; and she never made it a subject of conversation, feeling bound to prove to him by her conduct that her sentiments agreed with his.

The same day, which was the Sunday before Christmas, after Werther had written the last-mentioned letter to his friend, he came in the evening to Charlotte's house, and found her alone. She was busy preparing some little gifts for her brothers and sisters, which were to be distributed to them on Christmas Day. He began talking of the delight of the children, and of that age when the sudden appearance of the Christmas-tree, decorated with fruit and sweetmeats, and lighted up with wax candles, causes such transports of joy. "You shall have a gift too, if you behave well," said Charlotte, hiding her embarrassment under a sweet smile. "And what do you call behav-

ing well? What should I do, what can I do, my dear Charlotte?" said he. "Thursday night," she answered, "is Christmas Eve. The children are all to be here, and my father too: there is a present for each; do you come likewise, but do not come before that time." Werther started. "I desire you will not: it must be so," she continued. "I ask it of you as a favour, for my own peace and tranquillity. We cannot go on in this manner any longer." He turned away his face, walked hastily up and down the room, muttering indistinctly, "We cannot go on in this manner any longer!" Charlotte, seeing the violent agitation into which these words had thrown him, endeavoured to divert his thoughts by different questions, but in vain. "No, Charlotte!" he exclaimed; "I will never see you any more!" "And why so?" she answered. "We may — we must see each other again; only let it be with more discretion. Oh! why were you born with that excessive, that ungovernable passion for everything that is dear to you?" Then, taking his hand, she said, "I entreat of you to be more calm: your talents, your understanding, your genius, will furnish you with a thousand resources. Be a man, and conquer an unhappy attachment toward a creature who can do nothing but pity you." He bit his lips, and looked at her with a gloomy countenance. She continued to hold his hand. "Grant me but a moment's patience, Werther," she said. "Do you not see that you are deceiving yourself, that you are seeking your own destruction? Why must you love me, me only, who belong to another? I fear, I much fear, that it is only the impossibility of possessing me which makes your desire for me so strong." He drew back his hand, whilst he surveyed her with a wild and angry look. "'Tis well!" he exclaimed, "'tis very well! Did not Albert furnish you with this reflection? It is profound, a very profound remark." "A

reflection that any one might easily make," she answered; "and is there not a woman in the whole world who is at liberty, and has the power to make you happy? Conquer yourself: look for such a being, and believe me when I say that you will certainly find her. I have long felt for you, and for us all: you have confined yourself too long within the limits of too narrow a circle. Conquer yourself; make an effort: a short journey will be of service to you. Seek and find an object worthy of your love; then return hither, and let us enjoy together all the happiness of the most perfect friendship."

"This speech," replied Werther with a cold smile, "this speech should be printed, for the benefit of all teachers. My dear Charlotte, allow me but a short time longer, and all will be well." "But however, Werther," she added, "do not come again before Christmas." He was about to make some answer, when Albert came in. They saluted each other coldly, and with mutual embarrassment paced up and down the room. Werther made some common remarks; Albert did the same, and their conversation soon dropped. Albert asked his wife about some household matters; and, finding that his commissions were not executed, he used some expressions which, to Werther's ear, savoured of extreme harshness. He wished to go, but had not power to move; and in this situation he remained till eight o'clock, his uneasiness and discontent continually increasing. At length the cloth was laid for supper, and he took up his hat and stick. Albert invited him to remain; but Werther, fancying that he was merely paying a formal compliment, thanked him coldly, and left the house.

Werther returned home, took the candle from his servant, and retired to his room alone. He talked for some time with great earnestness to himself, wept aloud, walked in a state of great excitement through

his chamber; till at length, without undressing, he threw himself on the bed, where he was found by his servant at eleven o'clock, when the latter ventured to enter the room, and take off his boots. Werther did not prevent him, but forbade him to come in the morning till he should ring.

On Monday morning, the 21st of December, he wrote to Charlotte the following letter, which was found, sealed, on his bureau after his death, and was given to her. I shall insert it in fragments; as it appears, from several circumstances, to have been written in that manner.

"It is all over, Charlotte: I am resolved to die! I make this declaration deliberately and coolly, without any romantic passion, on this morning of the day when I am to see you for the last time. At the moment you read these lines, O best of women, the cold grave will hold the inanimate remains of that restless and unhappy being who, in the last moments of his existence, knew no pleasure so great as that of conversing with you! I have passed a dreadful night — or rather, let me say, a propitious one; for it has given me resolution, it has fixed my purpose. I am resolved to die. When I tore myself from you yesterday, my senses were in tumult and disorder; my heart was oppressed, hope and pleasure had fled from me for ever, and a petrifying cold had seized my wretched being. I could scarcely reach my room. I threw myself on my knees; and Heaven, for the last time, granted me the consolation of shedding tears. A thousand ideas, a thousand schemes, arose within my soul; till at length one last, fixed, final thought took possession of my heart. It was to die. I lay down to rest; and in the morning, in the quiet hour of awakening, the same determination was upon me. To die! It is not despair: it is conviction that

I have filled up the measure of my sufferings, that I have reached my appointed term, and must sacrifice myself for thee. Yes, Charlotte, why should I not avow it? One of us three must die: it shall be Werther. O beloved Charlotte! this heart, excited by rage and fury, has often conceived the horrid idea of murdering your husband — you — myself! The lot is cast at length. And in the bright, quiet evenings of summer, when you sometimes wander toward the mountains, let your thoughts then turn to me: recollect how often you have watched me coming to meet you from the valley; then bend your eyes upon the churchyard which contains my grave, and, by the light of the setting sun, mark how the evening breeze waves the tall grass which grows above my tomb. I was calm when I began this letter, but the recollection of these scenes makes me weep like a child."

About ten in the morning, Werther called his servant, and, whilst he was dressing, told him that in a few days he intended to set out upon a journey, and bade him therefore lay his clothes in order, and prepare them for packing up, call in all his accounts, fetch home the books he had lent, and give two months' pay to the poor dependants who were accustomed to receive from him a weekly allowance.

He breakfasted in his room, and then mounted his horse, and went to visit the steward, who, however, was not at home. He walked pensively in the garden, and seemed anxious to renew all the ideas that were most painful to him.

The children did not suffer him to remain alone long. They followed him, skipping and dancing before him, and told him, that after to-morrow — and to-morrow — and one day more, they were to receive their Christmas gift from Charlotte; and they then recounted all the wonders of which they had formed

ideas in their child imaginations. "To-morrow — and to-morrow," said he, "and one day more!" And he kissed them tenderly. He was going; but the younger boy stopped him, to whisper something in his ear. He told him that his elder brothers had written splendid New-Year's wishes — so large! — one for papa, and another for Albert and Charlotte, and one for Werther; and they were to be presented early in the morning, on New Year's Day. This quite overcame him. He made each of the children a present, mounted his horse, left his compliments for papa and mamma, and, with tears in his eyes, rode away from the place.

He returned home about five o'clock, ordered his servant to keep up his fire, desired him to pack his books and linen at the bottom of the trunk, and to place his coats at the top. He then appears to have made the following addition to the letter addressed to Charlotte:

"You do not expect me. You think I will obey you, and not visit you again till Christmas Eve. O Charlotte, to-day or never! On Christmas Eve you will hold this paper in your hand; you will tremble, and moisten it with your tears. I will — I must! Oh, how happy I feel to be determined!"

In the meantime, Charlotte was in a pitiable state of mind. After her last conversation with Werther, she found how painful to herself it would be to decline his visits, and knew how severely he would suffer from their separation.

She had, in conversation with Albert, mentioned casually that Werther would not return before Christmas Eve; and soon afterward Albert went on horseback to see a person in the neighbourhood, with whom he had to transact some business which would detain him all night.

Charlotte was sitting alone. None of her family

were near, and she gave herself up to the reflections that silently took possession of her mind. She was for ever united to a husband whose love and fidelity she had proved, to whom she was heartily devoted, and who seemed to be a special gift from Heaven to ensure her happiness. On the other hand, Werther had become dear to her. There was a cordial unanimity of sentiment between them from the very first hour of their acquaintance, and their long association and repeated interviews had made an indelible impression upon her heart. She had been accustomed to communicate to him every thought and feeling which interested her, and his absence threatened to open a void in her existence which it might be impossible to fill. How heartily she wished that she might change him into her brother, — that she could induce him to marry one of her own friends, or could reëstablish his intimacy with Albert.

She passed all her intimate friends in review before her mind, but found something objectionable in each, and could decide upon none to whom she would consent to give him.

Amid all these considerations she felt deeply but indistinctly that her own real but unexpressed wish was to retain him for herself, and her pure and amiable heart felt from this thought a sense of oppression which seemed to forbid a prospect of happiness. She was wretched: a dark cloud obscured her mental vision.

It was now half-past six o'clock, and she heard Werther's step on the stairs. She at once recognised his voice, as he inquired if she were at home. Her heart beat audibly — we could almost say for the first time — at his arrival. It was too late to deny herself; and, as he entered, she exclaimed, with a sort of ill-concealed confusion, "You have not kept your word!" "I promised nothing," he answered. "But you should

have complied, at least for my sake," she continued. "I implore you, for both our sakes."

She scarcely knew what she said or did, and sent for some friends, who, by their presence, might prevent her being left alone with Werther. He put down some books he had brought with him, then made inquiries about some others, until she began to hope that her friends might arrive shortly, entertaining at the same time a desire that they might stay away.

At one moment she felt anxious that the servant should remain in the adjoining room, then she changed her mind. Werther, meanwhile, walked impatiently up and down. She went to the piano, and determined not to retire. She then collected her thoughts, and sat down quietly at Werther's side, who had taken his usual place on the sofa.

"Have you brought nothing to read?" she inquired. He had nothing. "There in my drawer," she continued, "you will find your own translation of some of the songs of Ossian. I have not yet read them, as I have still hoped to hear you recite them; but, for some time past, I have not been able to accomplish such a wish." He smiled, and went for the manuscript, which he took with a shudder. He sat down; and, with eyes full of tears, he began to read.

"Star of descending night! fair is thy light in the west! thou liftest thy unshorn head from thy cloud; thy steps are stately on thy hill. What dost thou behold in the plain? The stormy winds are laid. The murmur of the torrent comes from afar. Roaring waves climb the distant rock. The flies of evening are on their feeble wings: the hum of their course is on the field. What dost thou behold, fair light? But thou dost smile and depart. The waves come with joy around thee: they bathe thy lovely hair. Farewell, thou silent beam! Let the light of Ossian's soul arise!

"And it does arise in its strength! I behold my departed friends. Their gathering is on Lora, as in the days of other years. Fingal comes like a watery column of mist! his heroes are around: and see the bards of song, gray-haired Ullin! stately Ryno! Alpin with the tuneful voice! the soft complaint of Minona! How are ye changed, my friends, since the days of Selma's feast! when we contended, like gales of spring as they fly along the hill, and bend by turns the feebly whistling grass.

"Minona came forth in her beauty, with downcast look and tearful eye. Her hair was flying slowly with the blast that rushed unfrequent from the hill. The souls of the heroes were sad when she raised the tuneful voice. Oft had they seen the grave of Salgar, the dark dwelling of white-bosomed Colma. Colma left alone on the hill with all her voice of song! Salgar promised to come! but the night descended around. Hear the voice of Colma, when she sat alone on the hill!

"*Colma.* It is night: I am alone, forlorn on the hill of storms. The wind is heard on the mountain. The torrent is howling down the rock. No hut receives me from the rain: forlorn on the hill of winds!

"Rise moon! from behind thy clouds. Stars of the night, arise! Lead me, some light, to the place where my love rests from the chase alone! His bow near him unstrung, his dogs panting around him! But here I must sit alone by the rock of the mossy stream. The stream and the wind roar aloud. I hear not the voice of my love! Why delays my Salgar; why the chief of the hill his promise? Here is the rock and here the tree! here is the roaring stream! Thou didst promise with night to be here. Ah! whither is my Salgar gone? With thee I would fly from my father, with thee from my brother of pride. Our race have long been foes: we are not foes, O Salgar!

"Cease a little while, O wind! stream, be thou silent awhile! let my voice be heard around! let my wanderer hear me! Salgar! it is Colma who calls. Here is the tree and the rock. Salgar, my love, I am here! Why delayest thou thy coming? Lo! the calm moon comes forth. The flood is bright in the vale. The rocks are gray on the steep. I see him not on the brow. His dogs come not before him with tidings of his near approach. Here I must sit alone!

"Who lie on the heath beside me? Are they my love and my brother? Speak to me, O my friends! To Colma they give no reply. Speak to me: I am alone! My soul is tormented with fears. Ah, they are dead! Their swords are red from the fight. O my brother! my brother! why hast thou slain my Salgar! Why, O Salgar, hast thou slain my brother! Dear were ye both to me! what shall I say in your praise? Thou wert fair on the hill among thousands! he was terrible in fight! Speak to me! hear my voice! hear me, sons of my love! They are silent! silent for ever! Cold, cold, are their breasts of clay! Oh, from the rock on the hill, from the top of the windy steep, speak, ye ghosts of the dead! Speak, I will not be afraid! Whither are ye gone to rest? In what cave of the hill shall I find the departed? No feeble voice is on the gale: no answer half drowned in the storm!

"I sit in my grief: I wait for morning in my tears! Rear the tomb, ye friends of the dead. Close it not till Colma come. My life flies away like a dream. Why should I stay behind? Here shall I rest with my friends, by the stream of the sounding rock. When night comes on the hill — when the loud winds arise, my ghost shall stand in the blast, and mourn the death of my friends. The hunter shall hear from his booth; he shall fear, but love my voice! For sweet shall my voice be for my friends: pleasant were her friends to Colma.

"Such was thy song, Minona, softly blushing daughter of Torman. Our tears descended for Colma, and our souls were sad! Ullin came with his harp; he gave the song of Alpin. The voice of Alpin was pleasant, the soul of Ryno was a beam of fire! But they had rested in the narrow house: their voice had ceased in Selma! Ullin had returned one day from the chase before the heroes fell. He heard their strife on the hill: their song was soft, but sad! They mourned the fall of Morar, first of mortal men! His soul was like the soul of Fingal: his sword like the sword of Oscar. But he fell, and his father mourned: his sister's eyes were full of tears. Minona's eyes were full of tears, the sister of car-borne Morar. She retired from the song of Ullin, like the moon in the west, when she foresees the shower, and hides her fair head in a cloud. I touched the harp with Ullin: the song of morning rose!

"*Ryno.* The wind and the rain are past, calm is the noon of day. The clouds are divided in heaven. Over the green hills flies the inconstant sun. Red through the stony vale comes down the stream of the hill. Sweet are thy murmurs, O stream! but more sweet is the voice I hear. It is the voice of Alpin, the son of song, mourning for the dead! Bent is his head of age: red his tearful eye. Alpin, thou son of song, why alone on the silent hill? why complainest thou, as a blast in the wood — as a wave on the lonely shore?

"*Alpin.* My tears, O Ryno! are for the dead — my voice for those that have passed away. Tall thou art on the hill; fair among the sons of the vale. But thou shalt fall like Morar: the mourner shall sit on thy tomb. The hills shall know thee no more: thy bow shall lie in thy hall unstrung!

"Thou wert swift, O Morar! as a roe on the desert: terrible as a meteor of fire. Thy wrath was as the

storm. Thy sword in battle as lightning in the field. Thy voice was a stream after rain, like thunder on distant hills. Many fell by thy arm: they were consumed in the flames of thy wrath. But when thou didst return from war, how peaceful was thy brow. Thy face was like the sun after rain: like the moon in the silence of night: calm as the breast of the lake when the loud wind is laid.

"Narrow is thy dwelling now! dark the place of thine abode! With three steps I compass thy grave, O thou who wast so great before! Four stones, with their heads of moss, are the only memorial of thee. A tree with scarce a leaf, long grass which whistles in the wind, mark to the hunter's eye the grave of the mighty Morar. Morar! thou art low indeed. Thou hast no mother to mourn thee, no maid with her tears of love. Dead is she that brought thee forth. Fallen is the daughter of Morglan.

"Who on his staff is this? Who is this whose head is white with age, whose eyes are red with tears, who quakes at every step? It is thy father, O Morar! the father of no son but thee. He heard of thy fame in war, he heard of foes dispersed. He heard of Morar's renown, why did he not hear of his wound? Weep, thou father of Morar! Weep, but thy son heareth thee not. Deep is the sleep of the dead, — low their pillow of dust. No more shall he hear thy voice, — no more awake at thy call. When shall it be morn in the grave, to bid the slumberer awake? Farewell, thou bravest of men! thou conqueror in the field! but the field shall see thee no more, nor the dark wood be lightened with the splendour of thy steel. Thou has left no son. The song shall preserve thy name. Future times shall hear of thee — they shall hear of the fallen Morar!

"The grief of all arose, but most the bursting sigh of Armin. He remembers the death of his son, who

fell in the days of his youth. Carmor was near the hero, the chief of the echoing Galmal. Why burst the sigh of Armin? he said. Is there a cause to mourn? The song comes with its music to melt and please the soul. It is like soft mist that, rising from a lake, pours on the silent vale; the green flowers are filled with dew, but the sun returns in his strength, and the mist is gone. Why art thou sad, O Armin, chief of sea-surrounded Gorma?

"Sad I am! nor small is my cause of woe! Carmor, thou hast lost no son; thou hast lost no daughter of beauty. Colgar the valiant lives, and Annira, fairest maid. The boughs of thy house ascend, O Carmor! but Armin is the last of his race. Dark is thy bed, O Daura! deep thy sleep in the tomb! When shalt thou wake with thy songs? — with all thy voice of music?

"Arise, winds of autumn, arise: blow along the heath. Streams of the mountains, roar; roar, tempests in the groves of my oaks! Walk through broken clouds, O moon! show thy pale face at intervals; bring to my mind the night when all my children fell, when Arindal the mighty fell — when Daura the lovely failed. Daura, my daughter, thou wert fair, fair as the moon on Fura, white as the driven snow, sweet as the breathing gale. Arindal, thy bow was strong, thy spear was swift on the field, thy look was like mist on the wave, thy shield a red cloud in a storm! Armar, renowned in war, came and sought Daura's love. He was not long refused: fair was the hope of their friends.

"Erath, son of Odgal, repined: his brother had been slain by Armar. He came disguised like a son of the sea: fair was his cliff on the wave, white his locks of age, calm his serious brow. Fairest of women, he said, lovely daughter of Armin! a rock not distant in the sea bears a tree on its side; red shines the fruit afar. There Armar waits for Daura. I come to carry his

love! she went — she called on Armar. Nought answered, but the son of the rock. Armar, my love, my love! why tormentest thou me with fear? Hear, son of Arnart, hear! it is Daura who calleth thee. Erath, the traitor, fled laughing to the land. She lifted up her voice — she called for her brother and her father. Arindal! Armin! none to relieve you, Daura.

"Her voice came over the sea. Arindal, my son, descended from the hill, rough in the spoils of the chase. His arrows rattled by his side; his bow was in his hand, five dark-gray dogs attended his steps. He saw fierce Erath on the shore; he seized and bound him to an oak. Thick wind the thongs of the hide around his limbs; he loads the winds with his groans. Arindal ascends the deep in his boat to bring Daura to land. Armar came in his wrath, and let fly the gray-feathered shaft. It sung, it sunk in thy heart, O Arindal, my son! for Erath the traitor thou diest. The oar is stopped at once: he panted on the rock, and expired. What is thy grief, O Daura, when round thy feet is poured thy brother's blood. The boat is broken in twain. Armar plunges into the sea to rescue his Daura, or die. Sudden a blast from a hill came over the waves; he sank, and he rose no more.

"Alone, on the sea-beat rock, my daughter was heard to complain; frequent and loud were her cries. What could her father do? All night I stood on the shore: I saw her by the faint beam of the moon. All night I heard her cries. Loud was the wind; the rain beat hard on the hill. Before morning appeared, her voice was weak; it died away like the evening breeze among the grass of the rocks. Spent with grief, she expired, and left thee, Armin, alone. Gone is my strength in war, fallen my pride among women. When the storms aloft arise, when the north lifts the wave on high, I sit by the sounding shore, and look on the fatal rock.

"Often by the setting moon I see the ghosts of my children; half viewless they walk in mournful conference together."

A torrent of tears which streamed from Charlotte's eyes and gave relief to her bursting heart, stopped Werther's recitation. He threw down the book, seized her hand, and wept bitterly. Charlotte leaned upon her hand, and buried her face in her handkerchief: the agitation of both was excessive. They felt that their own fate was pictured in the misfortunes of Ossian's heroes, — they felt this together, and their tears redoubled. Werther supported his forehead on Charlotte's arm: she trembled, she wished to be gone; but sorrow and sympathy lay like a leaden weight upon her soul. She recovered herself shortly, and begged Werther, with broken sobs, to leave her, — implored him with the utmost earnestness to comply with her request. He trembled; his heart was ready to burst: then, taking up the book again, he recommenced reading, in a voice broken by sobs.

"Why dost thou waken me, O spring? Thy voice woos me, exclaiming, I refresh thee with heavenly dews; but the time of my decay is approaching, the storm is nigh that shall wither my leaves. To-morrow the traveller shall come, — he shall come, who beheld me in beauty: his eye shall seek me in the field around, but he shall not find me."

The whole force of these words fell upon the unfortunate Werther. Full of despair, he threw himself at Charlotte's feet, seized her hands, and pressed them to his eyes and to his forehead. An apprehension of his fatal project now struck her for the first time. Her senses were bewildered: she held his hands, pressed them to her bosom; and, leaning toward him with emotions of the tenderest pity, her warm cheek touched his. They lost sight of everything. The world disappeared from their eyes. He clasped her

in his arms, strained her to his bosom, and covered her trembling lips with passionate kisses. "Werther!" she cried with a faint voice, turning herself away; "Werther!" and, with a feeble hand, she pushed him from her. At length, with the firm voice of virtue, she exclaimed, "Werther!" He resisted not, but, tearing himself from her arms, fell on his knees before her. Charlotte rose, and, with disordered grief, in mingled tones of love and resentment, she exclaimed, "It is the last time, Werther! You shall never see me any more!" Then, casting one last, tender look upon her unfortunate lover, she rushed into the adjoining room, and locked the door. Werther held out his arms, but did not dare to detain her. He continued on the ground, with his head resting on the sofa, for half an hour, till he heard a noise which brought him to his senses. The servant entered. He then walked up and down the room; and, when he was again left alone, he went to Charlotte's door, and, in a low voice, said, "Charlotte, Charlotte! but one word more, one last adieu!" She returned no answer. He stopped, and listened and entreated; but all was silent. At length he tore himself from the place, crying, "Adieu, Charlotte, adieu for ever!"

Werther ran to the gate of the town. The guards, who knew him, let him pass in silence. The night was dark and stormy, — it rained and snowed. He reached his own door about eleven. His servant, although seeing him enter the house without his hat, did not venture to say anything; and, as he undressed his master, he found that his clothes were wet. His hat was afterward found on the point of a rock overhanging the valley; and it is inconceivable how he could have climbed to the summit on such a dark, tempestuous night without losing his life.

He retired to bed, and slept to a late hour. The next morning his servant, upon being called to bring

his coffee, found him writing. He was adding, to Charlotte, what we here annex.

"For the last, last time I open these eyes. Alas! they will behold the sun no more. It is covered by a thick, impenetrable cloud. Yes, Nature! put on mourning: your child, your friend, your lover, draws near his end! This thought, Charlotte, is without parallel; and yet it seems like a mysterious dream when I repeat — this is my last day! The last! Charlotte, no word can adequately express this thought. The last! To-day I stand erect in all my strength — to-morrow, cold and stark, I shall lie extended upon the ground. To die! What is death? We do but dream in our discourse upon it. I have seen many human beings die; but, so straitened is our feeble nature, we have no clear conception of the beginning or the end of our existence. At this moment I am my own — or rather I am thine, thine, my adored! — and the next we are parted, severed — perhaps for ever! No, Charlotte, no! How can I, how can you, be annihilated? We exist. What is annihilation? A mere word, an unmeaning sound that fixes no impression on the mind. Dead, Charlotte! laid in the cold earth, in the dark and narrow grave! I had a friend once who was everything to me in early youth. She died. I followed her hearse; I stood by her grave when the coffin was lowered; and when I heard the creaking of the cords as they were loosened and drawn up, when the first shovelful of earth was thrown in, and the coffin returned a hollow sound, which grew fainter and fainter till all was completely covered over, I threw myself on the ground; my heart was smitten, grieved, shattered, rent — but I neither knew what had happened, nor what was to happen to me. Death! the grave! I understand not the words. — Forgive, oh, forgive me! Yesterday — ah,

that day should have been the last of my life! Thou angel! — for the first — first time in my existence, I felt rapture glow within my inmost soul. She loves, she loves me! Still burns upon my lips the sacred fire they received from thine. New torrents of delight overwhelm my soul. Forgive me, oh, forgive!

"I knew that I was dear to you; I saw it in your first entrancing look, knew it by the first pressure of your hand; but when I was absent from you, when I saw Albert at your side, my doubts and fears returned.

"Do you remember the flowers you sent me, when, at that crowded assembly, you could neither speak nor extend your hand to me? Half the night I was on my knees before those flowers, and I regarded them as the pledges of your love; but those impressions grew fainter, and were at length effaced.

"Everything passes away; but a whole eternity could not extinguish the living flame which was yesterday kindled by your lips, and which now burns within me. She loves me! These arms have encircled her waist, these lips have trembled upon hers. She is mine! Yes, Charlotte, you are mine for ever!

"And what do they mean by saying Albert is your husband? He may be so for this world; and in this world it is a sin to love you, to wish to tear you from his embrace. Yes, it is a crime; and I suffer the punishment, but I have enjoyed the full delight of my sin. I have inhaled a balm that has revived my soul. From this hour you are mine; yes, Charlotte, you are mine! I go before you. I go to my Father and to your Father. I will pour out my sorrows before him, and he will give me comfort till you arrive. Then will I fly to meet you. I will claim you, and remain in your eternal embrace, in the presence of the Almighty.

"I do not dream, I do not rave. Drawing nearer to the grave my perceptions become clearer. We

shall exist; we shall see each other again; we shall behold your mother; I shall behold her, and expose to her my inmost heart. Your mother — your image!"

About eleven o'clock Werther asked his servant if Albert had returned. He answered, "Yes;" for he had seen him pass on horseback: upon which Werther sent him the following note, unsealed:

"Be so good as to lend me your pistols for a journey. Adieu."

Charlotte had slept little during the past night. All her apprehensions were realised in a way that she could neither foresee nor avoid. Her blood was boiling in her veins, and a thousand painful sensations rent her pure heart. Was it the ardour of Werther's passionate embraces that she felt within her bosom? Was it anger at his daring? Was it the sad comparison of her present condition with former days of innocence, tranquillity, and self-confidence? How could she approach her husband, and confess a scene which she had no reason to conceal, and which she yet felt, nevertheless, unwilling to avow? They had preserved so long a silence toward each other — and should she be the first to break it by so unexpected a discovery? She feared that the mere statement of Werther's visit would trouble him, and his distress would be heightened by her perfect candour. She wished that he could see her in her true light, and judge her without prejudice; but was she anxious that he should read her inmost soul? On the other hand, could she deceive a being to whom all her thoughts had ever been exposed as clearly as crystal, and from whom no sentiment had ever been concealed? These reflections made her anxious and thoughtful. Her mind still dwelt on Werther, who was now lost to her, but

whom she could not bring herself to resign, and for whom she knew nothing was left but despair if she should be lost to him for ever.

A recollection of that mysterious estrangement which had lately subsisted between herself and Albert, and which she could never thoroughly understand, was now beyond measure painful to her. Even the prudent and the good have before now hesitated to explain their mutual differences, and have dwelt in silence upon their imaginary grievances, until circumstances have become so entangled, that in that critical juncture, when a calm explanation would have saved all parties, an understanding was impossible. And thus if domestic confidence had been earlier established between them, if love and kind forbearance had mutually animated and expanded their hearts, it might not, perhaps, even yet have been too late to save our friend.

But we must not forget one remarkable circumstance. We may observe from the character of Werther's correspondence, that he had never affected to conceal his anxious desire to quit this world. He had often discussed the subject with Albert; and, between the latter and Charlotte, it had not unfrequently formed a topic of conversation. Albert was so opposed to the very idea of such an action, that, with a degree of irritation unusual in him, he had more than once given Werther to understand that he doubted the seriousness of his threats, and not only turned them into ridicule, but caused Charlotte to share his feelings of incredulity. Her heart was thus tranquillised when she felt disposed to view the melancholy subject in a serious point of view, though she never communicated to her husband the apprehensions she sometimes experienced.

Albert, upon his return, was received by Charlotte with ill-concealed embarrassment. He was himself

out of humour; his business was unfinished; and he had just discovered that the neighbouring official, with whom he had to deal, was an obstinate and narrow-minded personage. Many things had occurred to irritate him.

He inquired whether anything had happened during his absence, and Charlotte hastily answered that Werther had been there on the evening previously. He then inquired for his letters, and was answered that several packages had been left in his study. He thereon retired, leaving Charlotte alone.

The presence of the being she loved and honoured produced a new impression on her heart. The recollection of his generosity, kindness, and affection had calmed her agitation: a secret impulse prompted her to follow him; she took her work and went to his study, as was often her custom. He was busily employed opening and reading his letters. It seemed as if the contents of some were disagreeable. She asked some questions: he gave short answers, and sat down to write.

Several hours passed in this manner, and Charlotte's feelings became more and more melancholy. She felt the extreme difficulty of explaining to her husband, under any circumstances, the weight that lay upon her heart; and her depression became every moment greater, in proportion as she endeavoured to hide her grief, and to conceal her tears.

The arrival of Werther's servant occasioned her the greatest embarrassment. He gave Albert a note, which the latter coldly handed to his wife, saying, at the same time, "Give him the pistols. I wish him a pleasant journey," he added, turning to the servant. These words fell upon Charlotte like a thunderstroke: she rose from her seat half-fainting, and unconscious of what she did. She walked mechanically toward the wall, took down the pistols with a trembling hand,

slowly wiped the dust from them, and would have delayed longer, had not Albert hastened her movements by an impatient look. She then delivered the fatal weapons to the servant, without being able to utter a word. As soon as he had departed, she folded up her work, and retired at once to her room, her heart overcome with the most fearful forebodings. She anticipated some dreadful calamity. She was at one moment on the point of going to her husband, throwing herself at his feet, and acquainting him with all that had happened on the previous evening, that she might acknowledge her fault, and explain her apprehensions; then she saw that such a step would be useless, as she would certainly be unable to induce Albert to visit Werther. Dinner was served; and a kind friend whom she had persuaded to remain assisted to sustain the conversation, which was carried on by a sort of compulsion, till the events of the morning were forgotten.

When the servant brought the pistols to Werther, the latter received them with transports of delight upon hearing that Charlotte had given them to him with her own hand. He ate some bread, drank some wine, sent his servant to dinner, and then sat down to write as follows:

"They have been in your hands — you wiped the dust from them. I kiss them a thousand times — you have touched them. Yes, Heaven favours my design — and you, Charlotte, provide me with the fatal instruments. It was my desire to receive my death from your hands, and my wish is gratified. I have made inquiries of my servant. You trembled when you gave him the pistols, but you bade me no adieu. Wretched, wretched that I am — not one farewell! How could you shut your heart against me in that hour which makes you mine for ever? O Charlotte, ages cannot

efface the impression — I feel you cannot hate the man who so passionately loves you!"

After dinner he called his servant, desired him to finish the packing up, destroyed many papers, and then went out to pay some trifling debts. He soon returned home, then went out again, notwithstanding the rain, walked for some time in the count's garden, and afterward proceeded farther into the country. Toward evening he came back once more, and resumed his writing.

"Wilhelm, I have for the last time beheld the mountains, the forests, and the sky. Farewell! And you, my dearest mother, forgive me! Console her, Wilhelm. God bless you! I have settled all my affairs! Farewell! We shall meet again, and be happier than ever."

"I have requited you badly, Albert; but you will forgive me. I have disturbed the peace of your home. I have sowed distrust between you. Farewell! I will end all this wretchedness. And oh, that my death may render you happy! Albert, Albert! make that angel happy, and the blessing of Heaven be upon you!"

He spent the rest of the evening in arranging his papers: he tore and burned a great many; others he sealed up, and directed to Wilhelm. They contained some detached thoughts and maxims, some of which I have perused. At ten o'clock he ordered his fire to be made up, and a bottle of wine to be brought to him. He then dismissed his servant, whose room, as well as the apartments of the rest of the family, was situated in another part of the house. The servant lay down without undressing, that he might be the sooner ready for his journey in the morning, his master having informed him that the post-horses would be at the door before six o'clock.

"Past eleven o'clock! All is silent around me, and my soul is calm. I thank thee, O God, that thou bestowest strength and courage upon me in these last moments! I approach the window, my dearest of friends; and through the clouds, which are at this moment driven rapidly along by the impetuous winds, I behold the stars which illumine the eternal heavens. No, you will not fall, celestial bodies: the hand of the Almighty supports both you and me! I have looked for the last time upon the constellation of the Greater Bear: it is my favourite star; for when I bade you farewell at night, Charlotte, and turned my steps from your door, it always shone upon me. With what rapture have I at times beheld it! How often have I implored it with uplifted hands to witness my felicity! and even still— But what object is there, Charlotte, which fails to summon up your image before me? Do you not surround me on all sides? and have I not, like a child, treasured up every trifle which you have consecrated by your touch?

"Your profile, which was so dear to me, I return to you; and I pray you to preserve it. Thousands of kisses have I imprinted upon it, and a thousand times has it gladdened my heart on departing from and returning to my home.

"I have implored your father to protect my remains. At the corner of the churchyard, looking toward the fields, there are two lime-trees — there I wish to lie. Your father can, and doubtless will, do thus much for his friend. Implore it of him. But perhaps pious Christians will not choose that their bodies should be buried near the corpse of a poor, unhappy wretch like me. Then let me be laid in some remote valley, or near the highway, where the priest and Levite may bless themselves as they pass by my tomb, whilst the Samaritan will shed a tear for my fate.

"See, Charlotte, I do not shudder to take the cold

and fatal cup, from which I shall drink the draught of death. Your hand presents it to me, and I do not tremble. All, all is now concluded: the wishes and the hopes of my existence are fulfilled. With cold, unflinching hand I knock at the brazen portals of Death.

"Oh, that I had enjoyed the bliss of dying for you! how gladly would I have sacrificed myself for you, Charlotte! And could I but restore peace and joy to your bosom, with what resolution, with what joy, would I not meet my fate! But it is the lot of only a chosen few to shed their blood for their friends, and by their death to augment, a thousand times, the happiness of those by whom they are beloved.

"I wish, Charlotte, to be buried in the dress I wear at present: it has been rendered sacred by your touch. I have begged this favour of your father. My spirit soars above my sepulchre. I do not wish my pockets to be searched. The knot of pink ribbon which you wore on your bosom the first time I saw you, surrounded by the children — Oh, kiss them a thousand times for me, and tell them the fate of their unhappy friend! I think I see them playing around me. The dear children! How warmly have I been attached to you, Charlotte! Since the first hour I saw you, how impossible have I found it to leave you. This ribbon must be buried with me: it was a present from you on my birthday. How confused it all appears! Little did I then think that I should journey this road. But peace! I pray you, peace!

"They are loaded — the clock strikes twelve. I say amen. Charlotte, Charlotte! farewell, farewell!"

A neighbour saw the flash, and heard the report of the pistol; but, as everything remained quiet, he thought no more of it.

In the morning, at six o'clock, the servant went into

Werther's room with a candle. He found his master stretched upon the floor, weltering in his blood, and the pistols at his side. He called, he took him in his arms, but received no answer. Life was not yet quite extinct. The servant ran for a surgeon, and then went to fetch Albert. Charlotte heard the ringing of the bell: a cold shudder seized her. She wakened her husband, and they both rose. The servant, bathed in tears, faltered forth the dreadful news. Charlotte fell senseless at Albert's feet.

When the surgeon came to the unfortunate Werther, he was still lying on the floor; and his pulse beat, but his limbs were cold. The bullet, entering the forehead, over the right eye, had penetrated the skull. A vein was opened in his right arm: the blood came, and he still continued to breathe.

From the blood which flowed from the chair, it could be inferred that he had committed the rash act sitting at his bureau, and that he afterward fell upon the floor. He was found lying on his back near the window. He was in full-dress costume.

The house, the neighbourhood, and the whole town were immediately in commotion. Albert arrived. They had laid Werther on the bed: his head was bound up, and the paleness of death was upon his face. His limbs were motionless; but he still breathed, at one time strongly, then weaker — his death was momently expected.

He had drunk only one glass of the wine. "Emilia Galotti" lay open upon his bureau.

I shall say nothing of Albert's distress, or of Charlotte's grief.

The old steward hastened to the house immediately upon hearing the news: he embraced his dying friend amid a flood of tears. His eldest boys soon followed him on foot. In speechless sorrow they threw themselves on their knees by the bedside, and kissed his

hands and face. The eldest, who was his favourite, hung over him till he expired; and even then he was removed by force. At twelve o'clock Werther breathed his last. The presence of the steward, and the precautions he had adopted, prevented a disturbance; and that night, at the hour of eleven, he caused the body to be interred in the place which Werther had selected for himself.

The steward and his sons followed the corpse to the grave. Albert was unable to accompany them. Charlotte's life was despaired of. The body was carried by labourers. No priest attended.

Elective Affinities

Part I.

Elective Affinities

CHAPTER I.

EDWARD (so we shall call a wealthy nobleman in the prime of life) had been spending several hours of a fine April morning in his nursery garden, budding the stems of some young trees with cuttings which had been recently sent to him. He had finished what he had been about; and, having laid his tools together in their box, was complacently surveying his work, when the gardener came up, and complimented his master on his industry.

"Have you seen my wife anywhere?" inquired Edward, as he moved to go away.

"My lady is alone yonder in the new grounds," said the man: "the summer-house which she has been making on the rock over against the castle is finished to-day, and really it is beautiful. It cannot fail to please your Grace. The view from it is perfect, — the village at your feet; a little to your right the church, with its tower, which you can just see over; and directly opposite you the castle and the garden."

"Quite true," replied Edward: "I can see the people at work a few steps from where I am standing."

"And then, to the right of the church, again," continued the gardener, "is the opening of the valley; and you look along over a range of wood and meadow far into the distance. The steps up the rock, too, are

excellently arranged. My lady understands these things: it is a pleasure to work under her orders."

"Go to her," said Edward, "and desire her to be so good as to wait for me there. Tell her I wish to see this new creation of hers, and enjoy it with her."

The gardener went rapidly off, and Edward soon followed. Descending the terrace, and stopping, as he passed, to look into the hothouses and the forcing-pits, he came presently to the stream, and thence, over a narrow bridge, to a place where the walk leading to the summer-house branched off in two directions. One path led across the churchyard, immediately up the face of the rock. The other, into which he struck, wound away to the left, with a more gradual ascent, through a pretty shrubbery. Where the two paths joined again, a seat had been made, where he stopped a few moments to rest; and then, following the now single road, he found himself, after scrambling along among steps and slopes of all sorts and kinds, conducted at last through a narrow, more or less steep, outlet to the summer-house.

Charlotte was standing at the door to receive her husband. She made him sit down where, without moving, he could command a view of the different landscapes through the door and window, these serving as frames in which they were set like pictures. Spring was coming on: a rich, beautiful life would soon everywhere be bursting; and Edward spoke of it with delight.

"There is only one thing which I should observe," he added: "the summer-house itself is rather small."

"It is large enough for you and me, at any rate," answered Charlotte.

"Certainly," said Edward: "there is room for a third, too, easily."

"Of course; and for a fourth also," replied Charlotte. "For larger parties we can contrive other places."

"Now that we are here by ourselves, with no one to disturb us, and in such a pleasant mood," said Edward, "it is a good opportunity for me to tell you that I have for some time had something on my mind, about which I have wished to speak to you, but have never been able to muster up my courage."

"I have observed that there has been something of the sort," said Charlotte.

"And even now," Edward went on, "if it were not for a letter which the post brought me this morning, and which obliges me to come to some resolution, to-day, I should very likely have still kept it to myself."

"What is it?" asked Charlotte, turning affectionately toward him.

"It concerns our friend the captain," answered Edward: "you know the unfortunate position in which he, like many others, is placed. It is through no fault of his own, but you may imagine how painful it must be for a person with his knowledge and talents and accomplishments to find himself without employment. I — I will not hesitate any longer with what I am wishing for him: I should like to have him here with us for a time."

"We must think about that," replied Charlotte: "it should be considered on more sides than one."

"I am quite ready to tell you what I have in view," returned Edward. "Through his last letters there is a prevailing tone of despondency, — not that he is really in any want: he knows thoroughly well how to limit his expenses, and I have taken care for everything absolutely necessary. It is no distress to him to accept obligations from me: all our lives we have been in the habit of borrowing from and lending to each other; and we could not tell, if we would, how our debtor and credit account stands. It is being without occupation which is really fretting him. The many accomplish-

ments which he has cultivated in himself it is his only pleasure — indeed it is his passion — to be daily and hourly exercising for the benefit of others. And now to sit still with his arms folded; or to go on studying, acquiring, and acquiring, when he can make no use of what he already possesses, — my dear creature, it is a painful situation; and, alone as he is, he feels it doubly and trebly."

"But I thought," said Charlotte, "that he had had offers from many different quarters. I myself wrote to numbers of my own friends, male and female, for him, and, as I have reason to believe, not without effect."

"It is true," replied Edward; "but these very offers, these various proposals, have only caused him fresh embarrassment. Not one of them is at all suitable to such a person as he is. He would have nothing to do: he would have to sacrifice himself, his time, his purposes, his whole method of life; and to that he cannot bring himself. The more I think of it all, the more I feel about it, and the more anxious I am to see him here with us."

"It is very beautiful and amiable on your part," answered Charlotte, "to enter with so much sympathy into your friend's position; only, you must allow me to ask you to think of yourself and of me, as well."

"I have done that," replied Edward. "For ourselves, we can have nothing to expect from his presence with us, except pleasure and advantage. I will say nothing of the expense. In any case, if he came to us, it would be but small; and you know he will be of no inconvenience to us at all. He can have his own rooms in the right wing of the castle, and everything else can be arranged as simply as possible. What shall we not be thus doing for him! and how agreeable and how profitable may not his society prove to us! I have long been wishing for a plan of the prop-

erty and the grounds. He will see to it, and get it made. You intend, yourself, to take the management of the estate, as soon as our present steward's term is expired; and that, you know, is a serious thing. His various information will be of immense benefit to us: I feel only too acutely how much I require a person of this kind. The country people have knowledge enough; but their way of imparting it is confused, and not always honest. The students from the towns and universities are sufficiently clever and orderly, but they are deficient in personal experience. From my friend, I can promise myself both knowledge and method; and hundreds of other circumstances I can easily conceive arising, affecting you as well as me, and from which I can foresee innumerable advantages. Thank you for so patiently listening to me. Now, do you say what you think, and say it out freely and fully: I will not interrupt you."

"Very well," replied Charlotte: "I will begin at once with a general observation. Men think most of the immediate — the present; and rightly, their calling being to do and to work. Women, on the other hand, more of how things hang together in life: and that rightly, too, because their destiny — the destiny of their families — is bound up in this interdependence; and it is exactly this which it is their mission to promote. So, now, let us cast a glance at our present and our past life; and you will acknowledge that the invitation of the captain does not fall in so entirely with our purposes, our plans, and our arrangements. I will go back to those happy days of our earliest intercourse. We loved each other, young as we then were, with all our hearts. We were parted: you from me — your father, from an insatiable desire of wealth, choosing to marry you to an elderly and rich lady; I from you, having to give my hand, without any especial motive, to an excellent man, whom I respected, if I did not

love. We became again free — you first, your poor mother at the same time leaving you in possession of your large fortune; I later, just at the time when you returned from abroad. So we met once more. We spoke of the past; we could enjoy and love the recollection of it; we might have been contented, in each other's society, to leave things as they were. You were urgent for our marriage. I at first hesitated. We were about the same age; but I, as a woman, had grown older than you as a man. At last I could not refuse you what you seemed to think the one thing you cared for. All the discomfort you had ever experienced, at court, in the army, or in travelling, you were to recover from at my side. You would settle down, and enjoy life, but only with me for your companion. I placed my daughter at a school where she could be more completely educated than would be possible in the retirement of the country; and I placed my niece Ottilie there with her as well, who, perhaps, would have grown up better at home with me, under my own care. This was done with your consent, merely that we might have our own lives to ourselves, — merely that we might enjoy undisturbed our so-long-wished-for, so-long-delayed, happiness. We came here, and settled ourselves. I undertook the domestic part of the *ménage;* you, the out-of-doors, and the general control. My own principle has been to meet your wishes in everything, to live only for you. At least, let us give ourselves a fair trial how far in this way we can be enough for one another."

"Since the interdependence of things, as you call it, is your especial element," replied Edward, "one should either never listen to any of your trains of reasoning, or make up one's mind to allow you to be in the right; and, indeed, you have been in the right up to the present day. The foundation which we have hitherto been laying for ourselves is of the true, sound sort;

only, are we to build nothing upon it? is nothing to be developed out of it? All the work we have done, — I in the garden, you in the park, — is it all only for a pair of hermits?"

"Well, well," replied Charlotte, "very well. What we have to look to is, that we introduce no alien element, nothing which shall cross or obstruct us. Remember, our plans, even those which only concern our amusements, depend mainly on our being together. You were to read to me, in consecutive order, the journal which you made when you were abroad. You were to take the opportunity of arranging it, putting all the loose matter connected with it in its place; and, with me to work with you and help you, out of these invaluable but chaotic leaves and sheets, to put together a complete thing, which should give pleasure to ourselves and to others. I promised to assist you in transcribing; and we thought it would be so pleasant, so delightful, so charming, to travel over in recollection the world which we were unable to see together. The beginning is already made. Then, in the evenings, you have taken up your flute again, accompanying me on the piano; while, of visits backwards and forwards among the neighbourhood, there is abundance. For my part, I have been promising myself out of all this the first really happy summer I have ever thought to spend in my life."

"Only, I cannot see," replied Edward, rubbing his forehead, "how, through every bit of this which you have been so sweetly and so sensibly laying before me, the captain's presence can be any interruption: I should rather have thought it would give it all fresh zest and life. He was my companion during a part of my travels. He made many observations from a different point of view from mine. We can put it all together, and so make a charmingly complete work of it."

"Well, then, I will acknowledge openly," answered Charlotte, with some impatience, "my feeling is against this plan. I have an instinct which tells me no good will come of it."

"You women are invincible in this way," replied Edward. "You are so sensible that there is no answering you; then, so affectionate, that one is glad to give way to you; full of feelings, which one cannot wound; and full of forebodings, which terrify one."

"I am not superstitious," said Charlotte: "and I care nothing for these dim sensations, merely as such; but, in general, they are the result of unconscious recollections of happy or unhappy consequences, which we have experienced as following on our own or others' actions. Nothing is of greater moment, in any state of things, than the intervention of a third person. I have seen friends, brothers and sisters, lovers, husbands and wives, whose relation to each other, through the accidental or intentional introduction of a third person, has been altogether changed, — whose whole moral condition has been inverted by it."

"That may very well be," replied Edward, "with people who live on, without looking where they are going; but not, surely, with persons who have attained to self-consciousness."

"Self-consciousness, my dearest husband," insisted Charlotte, "is not a sufficient weapon. It is very often a most dangerous one for the person who bears it. And, out of all this, at least so much seems to arise, that we should not be in too great a hurry. Let me have a few days to think: don't decide."

"As the matter stands," returned Edward, "however many days we wait, we shall still be in too great a hurry. The arguments for and against are all before us; all we want is the conclusion; and, as things are, I think the best thing we can do is to draw lots."

"I know," said Charlotte, "that, in doubtful cases, it

is your way to leave them to chance. To me, in such a serious matter, this seems almost a crime."

"Then, what am I to write to the captain?" cried Edward; "for write I must at once."

"Write him a kind, sensible, sympathising letter," answered Charlotte.

"That is as good as none at all," replied Edward.

"And there are many cases," answered she, "in which we are obliged, and in which it is the real kindness, rather to write nothing than not to write."

CHAPTER II.

EDWARD was alone in his room. The repetition of the incidents of his life from Charlotte's lips; the representation of their mutual situation, their mutual purposes, — had worked him, sensitive as he was, into a very pleasant state of mind. While close to her — while in her presence — he had felt so happy, that he had thought out a warm, kind, but quiet and indefinite, epistle which he would send to the captain. When, however, he had settled himself at his writing-table, and taken up his friend's letter to read it over once more, the sad condition of this excellent man rose again vividly before him. The feelings which had been all day distressing him again awoke, and it appeared impossible to him to leave one whom he called his friend in such painful embarrassment.

Edward was unaccustomed to deny himself anything. The only child, and consequently the spoiled child, of wealthy parents, who had persuaded him into a singular but highly advantageous marriage with a lady far older than himself; and again by her petted and indulged in every possible way, she seeking to reward his kindness to her by the utmost liberality; after her early death his own master, travelling independently of every one, equal to all contingencies and all changes, with desires never excessive, but multiple and various, — free-hearted, generous, brave, at times even noble, — what was there in the world to cross or thwart him?

Hitherto, everything had gone as he desired. Charlotte had become his; he had won her at last, with an obstinate, a romantic fidelity: and now he felt himself,

for the first time, contradicted, crossed in his wishes, when those wishes were to invite to his home the friend of his youth, — just as he was longing, as it were, to throw open his whole heart to him. He felt annoyed, impatient: he took up his pen again and again, and as often threw it down again because he could not make up his mind what to write. He would not go counter to his wife's wishes: still less could he go counter to her expressed desire. Ill at ease as he was, it would have been impossible for him, even if he had wished, to write a quiet, easy letter. The most natural thing to do, was to put it off. In a few words, he begged his friend to forgive him for having left his letter unanswered: that day he was unable to write circumstantially, but shortly he hoped to be able to tell him what he felt at greater length.

The next day, as they were walking to the same spot, Charlotte took the opportunity of bringing back the conversation to the subject; perhaps because she knew that there is no surer way of rooting out any plan or purpose than by often talking it over.

It was what Edward was wishing. He expressed himself in his own way, kindly and sweetly. For although, sensitive as he was, he flamed up readily, — although the vehemence with which he desired anything made him pressing, and his obstinacy made him impatient, — his words were so softened by his wish to spare the feelings of those to whom he was speaking, that it was impossible not to be charmed, even when one most disagreed with him.

On that morning he first contrived to bring Charlotte into the happiest humour, and then so disarmed her with the graceful turn which he gave to the conversation, that she cried out at last:

"You are determined that what I refuse to the husband you will make me grant to the lover. At least, my dearest," she continued, "I will acknowledge that

your wishes, and the warmth and sweetness with which you express them, have not left me untouched, have not left me unmoved. You drive me to make a confession: until now I, too, have had a concealment from you; I am in exactly the same position with you, and I have hitherto been putting the same restraint on my inclination which I have been exhorting you to put on yours."

"Glad am I to hear that," said Edward. "In the married state, a difference of opinion now and then, I see, is no bad thing. We learn something of one another by it."

"You are to learn at present, then," said Charlotte, "that I feel with regard to Ottilie as you do with regard to the captain. The dear child is most uncomfortable at the school, and I am thoroughly uneasy about her. Luciana, my daughter, born as she is for the world, is there training hourly for the world: languages, history, everything that is taught there, she acquires with so much ease, that, as it were, she learns them off at sight. She has quick natural gifts, and an excellent memory: one may almost say she forgets everything, and in a moment calls it all back again. She distinguishes herself above every one at the school with the freedom of her carriage, the grace of her movement, and the elegance of her address, and, with the inborn royalty of nature, makes herself the queen of the little circle there. The superior of the establishment regards her as a little divinity, who under her hands is shaping into excellence, and who will do her honour, gain her reputation, and bring her a large increase of pupils: the first pages of this good lady's letters, and her monthly notices of progress, are for ever hymns about the excellence of such a child, which I have to translate into my own prose: while her concluding sentences about Ottilie are nothing but excuse after excuse, — attempts at explaining how it can be that a

girl in other respects growing up so lovely seems coming to nothing, and shows neither capacity nor accomplishment. This, and the little she has to say besides, is no riddle to me; because I can see in this dear child the same character as that of her mother, who was my own dearest friend, who grew up with myself, and whose daughter, I am certain, if I had the care of her education, would form into an exquisite creature.

"This, however, has not fallen in with our plan; and as one ought not to be picking and pulling, or for ever introducing new elements among the conditions of our life, I think it better to bear, and to conquer as I can, even the unpleasant impression that my daughter, who knows very well that poor Ottilie is entirely dependent upon us, does not refrain from flourishing her own successes in her face, and so, to a certain extent, destroys the little good which we have done for her. Who are well enough trained never to wound others by a parade of their own advantages? and who stands so high as not at times to suffer under such a slight? In trials like these, Ottilie's character is growing in strength; but, since I have clearly known the painfulness of her situation, I have been thinking over all possible ways to make some other arrangement. Every hour I am expecting an answer to my own last letter, and then I do not mean to hesitate any more. So, my dear Edward, it is with me. We have both, you see, the same sorrows to bear, touching both our hearts in the same point. Let us bear them together, since we neither of us can press our own against the other."

"We are strange creatures," said Edward, smiling. "If we can only put out of sight anything which troubles us, we fancy at once we have got rid of it. We can give up much in the large and general, but to make sacrifices in little things, is a demand to which we are rarely equal. So it was with my mother, — as long as I lived with her, while a boy and a young man,

she could not bear to let me be a moment out of her sight. If I was out later than usual in my ride, some misfortune must have happened to me. If I got wet through in a shower, a fever was inevitable. I travelled: I was absent from her altogether; and, at once, I scarcely seemed to belong to her. If we look at it closer," he continued, "we are both acting very foolishly, very culpably. Two very noble natures, both of which have the closest claims on our affection, we are leaving exposed to pain and distress, merely to avoid exposing ourselves to a chance of danger. If this is not to be called selfish, what is? You take Ottilie; let me have the captain: and for a short period, at least, let the trial be made."

"We might venture it," said Charlotte thoughtfully, "if the danger were only to ourselves. But do you think it prudent to bring Ottilie and the captain into a situation where they must necessarily be so closely intimate, — the captain a man no older than yourself, of an age (I am not saying this to flatter you) when a man becomes first capable of love and first deserving of it, and a girl of Ottilie's attractiveness?"

"I cannot conceive how you can rate Ottilie so high," replied Edward. "I can only explain it to myself by supposing her to have inherited your affection for her mother. Pretty she is, no doubt. I remember the captain telling me so, when we came back last year, and met her at your aunt's. Attractive she is, — she has particularly pretty eyes; but I do not know that she made the slightest impression upon me."

"That was quite proper in you," said Charlotte, "seeing that I was there; and, although she is much younger than I, the presence of your old friend had so many charms for you, that you overlooked the promise of the opening beauty. It is one of your ways, and that is one reason why it is so pleasant to live with you."

Charlotte, openly as she appeared to be speaking, was keeping back something, nevertheless, which was, that, at the time when Edward first came back from aboard, she had purposely thrown Ottilie in his way, to secure, if possible, so desirable a match for her *protégée*. For of herself, at that time, in connection with Edward, she never thought at all. The captain, also, had a hint given to him to draw Edward's attention to her; but the latter, who was clinging determinately to his early affection for Charlotte, looked neither right nor left, and was only happy in the feeling that it was at last within his power to obtain for himself the one happiness which he so earnestly desired, and which a series of incidents had appeared to have placed for ever beyond his reach.

They were on the point of descending the new grounds, newly laid out, in order to return to the castle, when a servant came hastily to meet them, and, with a laugh on his face, called up from below, "Will your Grace be pleased to come quickly to the castle? The Herr Mittler has just galloped into the court. He shouted to us, to go all of us in search of you; and we were to ask whether there was need, 'whether there is need,' he cried after us, 'do you hear? but be quick, be quick.'"

"The odd fellow!" exclaimed Edward. "But has he not come at the right time, Charlotte? Tell him, there is need, — grievous need. He must alight. See his horse taken care of. Take him into the saloon, and let him have some luncheon. We shall be with him immediately.

"Let us take the nearest way," he said to his wife, and struck into the path across the churchyard, which he usually avoided. He was not a little surprised to find here, too, traces of Charlotte's delicate hand. Sparing, as far as possible, the old monuments, she had contrived to level it, and lay it carefully out, so

as to make it appear a pleasant spot on which the eye and the imagination could equally repose with pleasure. The oldest stones had each their special honour assigned them. They were ranged according to their dates along the wall, either leaning against it, or let into it, or however it could be contrived; and the string-course of the church was thus variously ornamented.

Edward was singularly affected as he came in upon it through the little wicket: he pressed Charlotte's hand, and tears started into his eyes. But these were very soon put to flight by the appearance of their singular visitor. This gentleman had declined sitting down in the castle: he had ridden straight through the village to the churchyard-gate; and then, halting, he called out to his friends, "Are you not making a fool of me? Is there need, really? If there is, I can stay till midday. But don't keep me. I have a great deal to do before night."

"Since you have taken the trouble to come so far," cried Edward to him, in answer, "you had better come through the gate. We meet at a solemn spot. Come and see the variety which Charlotte has thrown over its sadness."

"Inside there," called out the rider, "come I neither on horseback, nor in carriage, nor on foot. These here rest in peace: with them I have nothing to do. One day I shall be carried in feet foremost. I must bear that as I can. — Is it serious, I want to know?"

"Indeed it is," cried Charlotte, "right serious. For the first time in our married lives we are in a strait and difficulty, from which we do not know how to extricate ourselves."

"You do not look as if it were so," answered he. "But I will believe you. If you are deceiving me, for the future you shall help yourselves. Follow me quickly: my horse will be none the worse for a rest."

The three soon met in the parlour, where luncheon was brought in; and Mittler told them what he had done, and was going to do on that day. This eccentric person had in early life been a clergyman, and had distinguished himself in his office by the never-resting activity with which he contrived to make up and put an end to quarrels, — quarrels in families, and quarrels between neighbours; first among the individuals immediately about him, and afterward among whole congregations, and among the country gentlemen round. While he was in the ministry, no married couple were allowed to separate; and the district courts were untroubled with either cause or process. A knowledge of the law, he was well aware, was necessary to him. He gave himself with all his might to the study of it, and very soon felt himself a match for the best-trained advocate. His circle of activity extended wonderfully; and people were on the point of inducing him to move to the Residence, where he would find opportunities of exercising in the higher circles what he had begun in the lowest, when he won a considerable sum of money in a lottery. With this he bought himself a small property. He let the ground to a tenant, and made it the centre of his operations, with the fixed determination, or rather in accordance with his old customs and inclinations, never to enter a house when there was no dispute to make up, and no help to be given. People who were superstitious about names, and about what they imported, maintained that it was his being called Mittler which drove him to take upon himself this strange employment.

Luncheon was laid on the table, and the stranger then solemnly pressed his host not to wait any longer with the disclosure which he had to make. Immediately after refreshing himself he would be obliged to leave them.

Husband and wife made a circumstantial confession; but scarcely had he caught the substance of the matter, when he started angrily up from the table, rushed out of the saloon, and ordered his horse to be saddled instantly.

"Either you do not know me, you do not understand me," he cried, "or you are sorely mischievous. Do you call this a quarrel? Is there any want of help here? Do you suppose that I am in the world to give *advice?* Of all occupations which man can pursue, that is the most foolish. Every man must be his own counsellor, and do what he cannot let alone. If all go well, let him be happy, let him enjoy his wisdom and his fortune; if it go ill, I am at hand to do what I can for him. The man who desires to be rid of an evil, knows what he wants; but the man who desires something better than he has is stone-blind. Yes, yes, laugh as you will, he is playing blindman's-buff: perhaps he gets hold of something; but the question is, what he has got hold of. Do as you will: it is all one. Invite your friends to you, or let them be: it is all the same. The most prudent plans I have seen miscarry, and the most foolish succeed. Don't split your brains about it: and if, one way or the other, evil comes of what you settle, don't fret: send for me, and you shall be helped. Till which time I am your humble servant."

So saying, he sprang on his horse, without waiting the arrival of the coffee.

"Here you see," said Charlotte, "the small service a third person can be when things are off their balance between two persons closely connected: we are left, if possible, more confused and more uncertain than we were."

They would both probably have continued hesitating some time longer, had not a letter arrived from the captain in reply to Edward's last. He had made up

his mind to accept one of the situations which had been offered him, although it was not in the least up to his mark. He was to share the *ennui* of certain wealthy persons of rank, who depended on his ability to dissipate it.

Edward's keen glance saw into the whole thing; and he pictured it out in just, sharp lines.

"Can we endure to think of our friend in such a position?" he cried. "You cannot be so cruel, Charlotte."

"That strange Mittler is right, after all," replied Charlotte: "all such undertakings are ventures; what will come of them, it is impossible to foresee. New elements introduced among us may be fruitful in fortune or in misfortune, without our having to take credit to ourselves for one or the other. I do not feel myself firm enough to oppose you further. Let us make the experiment; only one thing I will entreat of you, — that it be only for a short time. You must allow me to exert myself more than ever, to use all my influence among all my connections, to find him some position which will satisfy him in his own way."

Edward assured his wife of his warmest gratitude. He hastened with a light, happy heart, to write off his proposals to his friend. Charlotte in a postscript was to signify her approbation with her own hand, and unite her own kind entreaties with his. She wrote, with a rapid pen, pleasantly and affectionately, but yet with a sort of haste which was not usual with her; and, most unlike herself, she disfigured the paper at last with a blot of ink, which put her out of temper, and which she only made worse with her attempts to wipe it away.

Edward laughed at her about it; and, as there was still room, added a second postscript, that his friend was to see from this symptom the impatience with which he was expected, and measure the speed at

which he came to them by the haste in which the letter was written.

The messenger was gone; and Edward thought he could not give a more convincing evidence of his gratitude than by insisting again and again that Charlotte should at once send for Ottilie from the school. She said she would think about it, and, for that evening, induced Edward to join with her in the enjoyment of a little music. Charlotte played exceedingly well on the piano, Edward not quite so well on the flute. He had taken a great deal of pains with it at times; but he lacked the patience, the perseverance, requisite for the completely successful cultivation of such a talent. Consequently his part was done unequally: some pieces well, only perhaps too quickly; while with others he hesitated, not being quite familiar with them; so that, for any one else, it would have been difficult to have gone through a duet with him. But Charlotte knew how to manage it. She held in, or let herself be run away with, and fulfilled in this way the double part of a skilful conductor and a prudent housewife, who are able always to keep right on the whole, although particular passages will now and then fall out of order.

CHAPTER III.

THE captain came, having previously written a most sensible letter, which had entirely quieted Charlotte's apprehensions. So much clearness about himself, so just an understanding of his own position and the position of his friends, promised everything which was best and happiest.

The conversation of the first few hours, as is generally the case with friends who have not met for a long time, was eager, lively, almost exhausting. Toward evening Charlotte proposed a walk to the new grounds. The captain was delighted with the spot, and observed every beauty which had been first brought into sight and made enjoyable by the new walks. He had a practised eye, and at the same time one easily satisfied; and, although he knew very well what was really valuable, he never, as so many persons do, made people who were showing him things of their own uncomfortable by requiring more than the circumstances admitted of, or by mentioning anything more perfect which he remembered having seen elsewhere.

When they arrived at the summer-house, they found it dressed out for a holiday, only, indeed, with artificial flowers and evergreens, but with some pretty bunches of natural corn-ears among them, and other field and garden fruit, so as to do credit to the taste which had arranged them.

"Although my husband does not like in general to have his birthday or christening-day kept," Charlotte

said, "he will not object to-day to these few ornaments being expended on a treble festival."

"Treble?" cried Edward.

"Yes, indeed," she replied. "Our friend's arrival here we are bound to keep as a festival; and have you never thought, either of you, that this is the day on which you were both christened? Are you not both named Otto?"

The two friends shook hands across the little table.

"You bring back to my mind," Edward said, "this little link of our boyish affection. As children we were both called so: but, when we came to be at school together, it was the cause of much confusion; and I readily made over to him all my right to the pretty, laconic name."

"Wherein you were not altogether so very high-minded," said the captain; "for I well remember that the name of Edward had then begun to please you better, from its attractive sound when spoken by certain pretty lips."

They were now all three sitting round the same table where Charlotte had spoken so vehemently against their guest's coming to them. Edward, happy as he was, did not wish to remind his wife of that time; but he could not help saying, —

"There is good room here for one more person."

At this moment the notes of a bugle were heard across from the castle. Full of happy thoughts and feelings as the friends all were together, the sound fell in among them with a strong force of answering harmony. They listened silently; each for the moment withdrawing into himself, and feeling doubly happy in the fair circle of which he formed a part. The pause was first broken by Edward, who started up, and walked out in front of the summer-house.

"Our friend must not think," he said to Charlotte,

"that this narrow little valley forms the whole of our domain and possessions. Let us take him up to the top of the hill, where he can see farther, and breathe more freely."

"For this once, then," answered Charlotte, "we must climb up the old foot-path, which is not too easy. By the next time, I hope my walks and steps will have been carried right up."

And so, among rocks and shrubs and bushes, they made their way to the summit, where they found themselves, not on a level flat, but on a sloping grassy terrace, running along the ridge of the hill. The village, with the castle behind it, was out of sight. At the bottom of the valley, sheets of water were seen spreading out right and left, with wooded hills rising immediately from their opposite margin, and, at the end of the upper water, a wall of sharp, precipitous rocks directly overhanging it, their huge forms reflected in its level surface. In the hollow of the ravine, where a considerable brook ran into the lake, lay a mill half hidden among the trees, a sweetly retired spot, most beautifully surrounded; and through the entire semicircle, over which the view extended, ran an endless variety of hills and valleys, copse and forest, the early green of which promised the near approach of a luxuriant clothing of foliage. In many places particular groups of trees caught the eye, and especially a cluster of planes and poplars directly at the spectator's feet, close to the edge of the centre lake. They were at their full growth; and they stood there, spreading out their boughs all around them, in fresh and luxuriant strength.

To these Edward called his friend's attention.

"I myself planted them," he cried, "when I was a boy. They were small trees which I rescued when my father was laying out the new part of the great castle garden, and in the middle of one summer had

rooted them out. This year you will no doubt see them show their gratitude in a fresh set of shoots."

They returned to the castle in high spirits, and mutually pleased with each other. To the guest was allotted an agreeable and roomy set of apartments in the right wing of the castle; and here he rapidly got his books and papers and instruments in order, to go on with his usual occupation. But Edward, for the first few days, gave him no rest. He took him about everywhere, now on foot, now on horseback, making him acquainted with the country and with the estate; and he embraced the opportunity of imparting to him the wishes, which he had been long entertaining, of getting at some better acquaintance with it, and learning to manage it more profitably.

"The first thing we have to do," said the captain, "is to make a magnetic survey of the property. That is a pleasant and easy matter; and, if it does not admit of entire exactness, it will be always useful, and will do, at any rate, for an agreeable beginning. It can be made, too, without any great staff of assistants; and one can be sure of getting it completed. If by and by you come to require anything more exact, it will be easy then to find some plan to have it made."

The captain was exceedingly skilful at work of this kind. He had brought with him whatever instruments he required, and commenced immediately. Edward provided him with a number of foresters and peasants, who, with his instruction, were able to render him all necessary assistance. The weather was favourable. The evenings and the early mornings were devoted to the designing and drawing; and, in a short time, it was all filled in and coloured. Edward saw his possessions grow out, like a new creation, upon the paper; and it seemed as if now, for the first time, he knew what they were, as if they now, first, were properly his own.

There occurred opportunities of speaking about the park, and the ways of laying it out, — a far better disposition of things being made possible, after a survey of this kind, than could be arrived at by experimenting on nature, on partial and accidental impressions.

"We must make my wife understand this," said Edward.

"We must do nothing of the kind," replied the captain, who did not like bringing his own notions in collision with those of others. He had learned by experience that the motives and purposes by which men are influenced are far too various to be made to coalesce upon a single point, even on the most solid representations. "We must not do it," he cried: "she will be only confused. With her, as with all people who employ themselves on such matters merely as amateurs, the important thing is, rather that she shall do something, than that something shall be done. Such persons feel their way with nature. They have fancies for this plan or that: they do not venture on removing obstacles. They are not bold enough to make a sacrifice. They do not know beforehand in what their work is to result. They try an experiment — it succeeds — it fails; they alter it; they alter, perhaps, what they ought to leave alone, and leave what they ought to alter; and so, at last, there always remains but a patchwork, which pleases and amuses, but never satisfies."

"Acknowledge candidly," said Edward, "that you do not like this new work of hers."

"The idea is excellent," he replied: "if the execution were equal to it, there would be no fault to find. But she has tormented herself to find her way up that rock; and she now torments every one, if you must have it, that she takes up after her. You cannot walk together, you cannot walk behind one another, with any freedom. Every moment your step is interrupted

one way or another. There is no end to the mistakes which she has made."

"Would it have been easy to do it otherwise?" asked Edward.

"Very easy," replied the captain. "She had only to break away a corner of the rock, — which is now but an unsightly object, made up as it is of little pieces, — and she would at once have a sweep for her walk, and stone in abundance for the rough masonry work, to widen it in the bad places, and make it smooth. But this I tell you in strictest confidence, or else it will confuse and annoy her. What is done must remain as it is. If any more money and labour are to be spent there, there is abundance to do above the summer-house on the hill, which we can settle our own way."

If the two friends found in their occupation abundance of present employment, there was no lack either of entertaining reminiscences of early times, in which Charlotte took her part as well. They determined, moreover, that, as soon as their immediate labours were finished, they would go to work upon the journal, and in this way, too, reproduce the past.

For the rest, when Edward and Charlotte were alone, there were fewer matters of private interest between them than formerly. This was especially the case since the fault-finding about the grounds, which Edward thought so just, and which he felt to the quick. He held his tongue about what the captain had said for a long time; but at last, when he saw his wife again preparing to go to work above the summer-house with her paths and steps, he could not contain himself any longer, but, after a few circumlocutions, came out with his new views.

Charlotte was thoroughly disturbed. She was sensible enough to perceive at once that they were right; but there was the difficulty with what was already done, — and what was made was made. She had

liked it: even what was wrong had become dear to her in its details. She fought against her convictions; she pleaded for her little creations; she railed at men who were for ever going to the broad and the great. They could not let a pastime, they could not let an amusement, alone, she said; but they must go and make a work out of it, never thinking of the expense which their larger plans involved. She was provoked, annoyed, and angry. Her old plans she could not give up, the new she would not quite throw from her; but, divided as she was, for the present she put a stop to the work, and gave herself time to think the thing over, and let it ripen by itself.

At the same time that she lost this source of active amusement, the others were more and more together over their own business. They took to occupying themselves, moreover, with the flower-garden and the hothouses; and, as they filled up the intervals with the ordinary gentlemen's amusements, — hunting, riding, buying, selling, breaking horses, and such matters, — she was every day left more and more to herself. She devoted herself more assiduously than ever to her correspondence on account of the captain, and yet she had many lonely hours; so that the information which she now received from the school became of more agreeable interest.

To a long-drawn letter of the superior of the establishment, filled with the usual expressions of delight at her daughter's progress, a brief postscript was attached, with a second from the hand of a gentleman in employment there as an assistant, both of which we here communicate.

POSTSCRIPT OF THE SUPERIOR.

"Of Ottilie, I can only repeat to your ladyship what I have already stated in my former letters. I do not

know how to find fault with her, yet I cannot say that I am satisfied. She is always unassuming, always ready to oblige others; but it is not pleasing to see her so timid, so almost servile.

"Your ladyship lately sent her some money, with several little matters for her wardrobe. The money she has never touched, the dresses lie unworn in their place. She keeps her things very nice and very clean, but this is all she seems to care about. Again, I cannot praise her excessive abstemiousness in eating and drinking. There is no extravagance at our table; but there is nothing I like better than to see the children eat enough of good, wholesome food. What is carefully provided and set before them ought to be taken, and to this I never can succeed in bringing Ottilie. She is always making herself some occupation or other, always finding something which she must do, something which the servants have neglected, to escape the second course or the dessert; and now it has to be considered (which I cannot help connecting with all this) that she frequently suffers, I have lately learned, from pain in the left side of her head. It is only at times; but it is distressing, and may be of importance. So much upon this otherwise sweet and lovely girl."

THE ASSISTANT'S ENCLOSURE.

"Our excellent superior commonly permits me to read the letters in which she communicates her observations upon her pupils to their parents and friends. Such of them as are addressed to your ladyship I ever read with twofold attention and pleasure. We have to congratulate you upon a daughter who unites in herself every brilliant quality with which people distinguish themselves in the world; and I at least think you no less fortunate in having had bestowed upon you, in your adopted daughter, a child who has been born

for the good and happiness of others, and assuredly also for her own. Ottilie is almost our only pupil about whom there is a difference of opinion between myself and our reverend superior. I do not complain of the very natural desire in that good lady to see outward and definite fruits arising from her labours. But there are also fruits which are not outward, which are of the true germinal sort, and which develop themselves, sooner or later, in a beautiful life. And this I am certain is the case with your *protégée*. So long as she has been under my care, I have watched her moving with an even step, slowly, steadily forward — never back. As with a child it is necessary to begin everything at the beginning, so it is with her. She can comprehend nothing which does not follow from what precedes; let a thing be as simple and easy as possible, she can make nothing of it if it is not in a recognisable connection; but find the intermediate links, and make them clear to her, and then nothing is too difficult for her.

"Progressing so slowly, she remains behind her companions, who, with capacities of quite a different kind, hurry on and on, learn everything readily, connected or unconnected, recollect it with ease, and apply it with correctness. And again, some of the lessons here are given by excellent, but somewhat hasty and impatient, teachers, who pass from result to result, cutting short the process by which they are arrived at; and these are not of the slightest service to her, she learns nothing from them. There have been complaints about her handwriting. They say she will not, or can not, understand how to form her letters. I have examined closely into this. It is true she writes slowly, stiffly if you like; but the hand is neither timid, nor without character. The French language is not my department: but I have taught her something of it, in the step-by-step fashion; and this she understands easily.

Indeed, it is singular that she knows a great deal, and knows it well too; and yet, when she is asked a question, it seems as if she knew nothing.

"To conclude generally, I should say she learns nothing like a person who is being educated; but she learns like one who is to educate, — not like a pupil, but like a future teacher. Your ladyship may think it strange that I, as an educator and a teacher, can find no higher praise to give to any one than by a comparison with myself. I may leave it to your own good sense, to your deep knowledge of the world and of mankind, to make the best of my most inadequate, but well-intended, expressions. You may satisfy yourself that you have much happiness to promise yourself from this child. I commend myself to your ladyship; and I beseech you to permit me to write to you again, as soon as I see reason to believe that I have anything important or agreeable to communicate."

This letter gave Charlotte great pleasure. The contents of it agreed very nearly with the notions which she had herself conceived of Ottilie. At the same time, she could not help smiling at the excessive interest of the assistant, which seemed greater than the insight into a pupil's excellence usually calls forth. In her quiet, unprejudiced way of looking at things, this relation, among others, she was contented to permit to lie before her as a possibility: she could value the interest of so sensible a man in Ottilie, having learned, among the lessons of her life, to see how highly true regard is to be prized, in a world where indifference or dislike are the common, natural residents.

CHAPTER IV.

THE topographical chart of the property and its environs was completed. It was executed on a considerable scale; the character of the particular localities was made intelligible by various colours; and, by means of a trigonometrical survey, the captain had been able to arrive at a very fair exactness of measurement. He had been rapid in his work. There was scarcely ever any one who could do with less sleep than this most laborious man; and, as his day was always devoted to an immediate purpose, every evening something had been done.

"Let us now," he said to his friend, "go on to what remains for us, — to the statistics of the estate. We shall have a deal of work to get through at the beginning; and afterward we shall come to the farm-estimates; and much else which will naturally arise out of them. Only we must have one thing distinctly settled and adhered to. Everything which is properly *business* we must keep carefully separate from *life*. Business requires earnestness and method: life must have a freer handling. Business demands the utmost stringency and sequence: in life, inconsecutiveness is frequently necessary, indeed, is charming and graceful. If you are firm in the first, you can afford yourself more liberty in the second; while, if you mix them, you will find the free interfering with, and breaking in upon, the fixed."

In these sentiments Edward felt a slight reflection upon himself. Though not naturally disorderly, he could never bring himself to arrange his papers in their

proper places. What he had to do in connection with others was not kept separate from what only depended on himself. Business got mixed up with amusement, and serious work with recreation. Now, however, it was easy for him, with the help of a friend, who would take the trouble upon himself; and a second "I" worked out the separation, to which the single "I" was always unequal.

In the captain's wing, they contrived a depository for what concerned the present, and an archive for the past. Here they brought all the documents, papers, and notes from their various hiding-places — rooms, drawers, and boxes — with the utmost speed. Harmony and order were introduced into the wilderness, and the different packets were marked and registered in their several pigeon-holes. They found all they wanted in greater completeness even than they had expected; and here an old clerk was found of no slight service, who for the whole day and part of the night never left his desk, and with whom, till then, Edward had been always dissatisfied.

"I should not know him again," he said to his friend, "the man is so handy and useful."

"That," replied the captain, "is because we give him nothing fresh to do till he has finished, at his convenience, what he has already; and so, as you perceive, he gets through a great deal. If you disturb him, he becomes useless at once."

Spending their days together in this way, they never neglected visiting Charlotte regularly in the evenings. If there was no party from the neighbourhood, as was often the case, they read and talked, principally on subjects connected with the improvement of the condition and comfort of social life.

Charlotte, always accustomed to make the most of opportunities, not only saw her husband pleased, but found personal advantages for herself. Various do-

mestic arrangements, which she had long wished to make, but which she did not know exactly how to set about, were managed for her through the contrivance of the captain. Her domestic medicine-chest, hitherto but poorly furnished, was enlarged and enriched; and Charlotte herself, with the help of good books and personal instruction, was put in the way of being able to exercise her disposition to be of practical assistance more frequently and more efficiently than before.

In providing against accidents, which, though common, yet only too often find us unprepared, they thought it especially necessary to have at hand whatever is required for the recovery of drowning men, — accidents of this kind, from the number of canals, reservoirs, and water-works in the neighbourhood, being of frequent occurrence. This department the captain took expressly into his own hands; and the observation escaped Edward, that a case of this kind had made a very singular epoch in the life of his friend. The latter made no reply, but seemed to be trying to escape from a painful recollection. Edward immediately stopped; and Charlotte, who, as well as he, had a general knowledge of the story, took no notice of the expression.

"These preparations are all exceedingly valuable," said the captain one evening. "Now, however, we have not got the one thing which is most essential, — a sensible man who understands how to manage it all. I know an army surgeon, whom I could exactly recommend for the place. You might get him at this moment, on easy terms. He is highly distinguished in his profession, and has frequently done more for me in the treatment, even of violent inward disorders, than celebrated physicians. Help upon the spot is the thing you often most want in the country."

He was written for at once: and Edward and Charlotte were rejoiced to find so good and necessary an

object on which to expend so much of the money which they set apart for such accidental demands upon them.

Thus Charlotte, too, found means of making use, for her purposes, of the captain's knowledge and practical skill; and she began to be quite reconciled to his presence, and to feel easy about any consequences that might ensue. She commonly prepared questions to ask him; among other things, it was one of her anxieties to provide against whatever was prejudicial to health and comfort, — against poisons and such like. The lead-glazing on the china, the verdigris which formed about her copper and bronze vessels, etc., had long been a trouble to her. She got him to tell her about these; and, naturally, they often had to fall back on the first elements of medicine and chemistry.

An accidental but welcome occasion for entertainment of this kind was given by an inclination of Edward to read aloud. He had a particularly clear, deep voice, and earlier in life had earned himself a pleasant reputation for his feeling and lively recitations of works of poetry and oratory. At this time he was occupied with other subjects; and the books which, for sometime past, he had been reading, were either chemical, or on some other branch of natural or technical science.

One of his especial peculiarities — which, by the bye, he very likely shares with a number of his fellow creatures — was, that he could not bear to have any one looking at the page from behind him while reading. In early life, when he used to read poems, plays, or stories, this had been the natural consequence of the desire which the reader feels, like the poet or the actor or the story-teller, to make surprises, to pause, to excite expectation; and this sort of effect was naturally defeated when a third person's eyes could run on before him, and see what was coming.

On such occasions, therefore, he was accustomed to place himself in such a position that no one could get behind him. With a party of only three, this was unnecessary; and as with the present subject there was no opportunity for exciting feelings or giving the imagination a surprise, he did not take any particular pains to protect himself.

One evening he had placed himself carelessly, and Charlotte happened by accident to cast her eyes upon the page. His old impatience was aroused: he turned to her, and said, almost unkindly:

"I do wish, once for all, you would leave off doing a thing so out of taste and so disagreeable. When I read aloud to a person, is it not the same as if I was telling him something by word of mouth? The written, the printed, word is in the place of my own thoughts, of my own heart. If a window were broken into my brain or into my heart, and if the man to whom I am counting out my thoughts, or delivering my sentiments, one by one, knew already beforehand exactly what was to come out of me, should I take the trouble to put them into words? When anybody looks over my book, I always feel as if I were being torn in two."

Charlotte's tact, in whatever circle she might be, large or small, was remarkable; and she was able to set aside disagreeable or excited expressions without appearing to notice them. When a conversation grew tedious, she knew how to interrupt it; when it halted, she could set it going. And this time her good gift did not forsake her.

"I am sure you will forgive me my fault," she said, "when I tell you what it was this moment which came over me. I heard you reading something about affinities; and I thought directly of some relations of mine, two of whom are just now occupying me a great deal. Then my attention went back to the book. I

found it was not about living things at all, and I looked over to get the thread of it right again."

"It was the comparison which led you wrong and confused you," said Edward. "The subject is nothing but earths and minerals. But man is a true Narcissus: he delights to see his own image everywhere; and he spreads himself underneath the universe, like the amalgam behind the glass."

"Quite true," continued the captain. "That is the way in which he treats everything external to himself. His wisdom and his folly, his will and his caprice, he attributes alike to the animal, the plant, the elements, and the gods."

"Would you," said Charlotte, "if it is not taking you away too much from the immediate subject, tell me briefly what is meant here by affinities?"

"I shall be very glad indeed," replied the captain, to whom Charlotte had addressed herself. "That is, I will tell you as well as I can. My ideas on the subject date ten years back: whether the scientific world continues to think the same about it, I cannot tell."

"It is most disagreeable," cried Edward, "that one cannot nowadays learn a thing once for all, and have done with it. Our forefathers could keep to what they were taught when they were young; but we have, every five years, to make revolutions with them, if we do not wish to drop altogether out of fashion."

"We women need not be so particular," said Charlotte; "and, to speak the truth, I only want to know the meaning of the word. There is nothing more ridiculous in society than to misuse a strange technical word; and I only wish you to tell me in what sense the expression is made use of in connection with these things. What its scientific application is, I am quite contented to leave to the learned, who, by the bye, as far as I have been able to observe, do not find it easy to agree among themselves."

"Whereabouts shall we begin," said Edward, after a pause, to the captain, "to come most quickly to the point?"

The latter, after thinking a little while, replied shortly:

"You must let me make what will seem a wide sweep: we shall be on our subject almost immediately."

Charlotte laid her work aside, promising the fullest attention.

The captain began:

"In all natural objects with which we are acquainted, we observe immediately that they have a certain relation to themselves. It may sound ridiculous to be asserting what is obvious to every one; but it is only by coming to a clear understanding together about what we know, that we can advance to what we do not know."

"I think," interrupted Edward, "we can make the thing more clear to her, and to ourselves, with examples. Conceive water or oil or quicksilver: among these you will see a certain oneness, a certain connection of their parts; and this oneness is never lost, except through force or some other determining cause. Let the cause cease to operate, and at once the parts unite again."

"Unquestionably," said Charlotte, "that is plain: rain-drops readily unite and form streams; and, when we were children, it was our delight to play with quicksilver, and wonder at the little globules splitting and parting, and running into one another."

"And here," said the captain, "let me just cursorily mention one remarkable thing: I mean, that the full, complete correlation of parts, which the fluid state makes possible, shows itself distinctly and universally in the globular form. The falling water-drop is round; you yourself spoke of the globules of quicksilver; and

a drop of melted lead let fall, if it has time to harden before it reaches the ground, is found at the bottom in the shape of a ball."

"Let me try and see," said Charlotte, "whether I can understand where you are bringing me. As everything has a reference to itself, so it must have some relation to others."

"And that," interrupted Edward, "will be different according to the natural differences of the things themselves. Sometimes they will meet like friends and old acquaintances: they will come rapidly together, and unite without either having to alter itself at all, — as wine mixes with water. Others, again, will remain as strangers side by side; and no amount of mechanical mixing or forcing will succeed in combining them. Oil and water may be shaken up together; and the next moment they are separate again, each by itself."

"One can almost fancy," said Charlotte, "that in these simple forms one sees people that one is acquainted with; one has met with just such things in the societies amongst which one has lived; and the strangest likenesses of all, with these soulless creatures, are in the masses in which men stand divided one against the other, in their classes and professions, — the nobility and the third estate, for instance, or soldiers and civilians."

"Then, again," replied Edward, "as these are united together under common laws and customs, so there are intermediate members in our chemical world, which will combine elements that are mutually repulsive."

"Oil, for instance," said the captain, "we make combine with water with the help of alkalies — "

"Do not go on too fast with your lesson," said Charlotte. "Let me see that I keep step with you. Are we not here arrived among the affinities?"

"Exactly," replied the captain: "we are on the point of apprehending them in all their power and dis-

tinctness; such natures as, when they come in contact, at once lay hold of each other, and mutually affect one another, we speak of as having an affinity one for the other. With the alkalies and acids, for instance, the affinities are strikingly marked. They are of opposite natures: very likely their being of opposite natures is the secret of their effect on one another, — they seek one another eagerly out, lay hold of each other, modify each other's character, and form in connection an entirely new substance. There is lime, you remember, which shows the strongest inclination for all sorts of acids, — a distinct desire of combining with them. As soon as our chemical chest arrives, we can show you a number of entertaining experiments, which will give you a clearer idea than words and names and technical expressions."

"It appears to me," said Charlotte, "that, if you choose to call these strange creatures of yours related, the relationship is not so much a relationship of blood, as of soul or of spirit. It is the way in which we see all genuinely deep friendships arise among men: opposite peculiarities of disposition being what best makes internal union possible. But I will wait to see what you can really show me of these mysterious proceedings; and for the present," she added, turning to Edward, "I will promise not to disturb you any more in your reading. You have taught me enough of what it is about to enable me to attend to it."

"No, no," replied Edward: "now that you have once stirred the thing, you shall not get off so easily. It is just the most complicated cases which are the most interesting. In these you come first to see the degrees of the affinities, to watch them as their power of attraction is weaker or stronger, nearer or more remote. Affinities only begin really to interest when they bring about separations."

"What!" cried Charlotte, "is that miserable word

which unhappily we hear so often nowadays in the world, — is that to be found in nature's lessons too?"

"Most certainly," answered Edward: "the title with which chemists were supposed to be most honourably distinguished was, artists of separation."

"It is not so any more," replied Charlotte; "and it is well that it is not. Uniting is a higher art, and it is a higher merit. An artist of union is what we should welcome in every province of the universe. However, as we are on the subject again, give me an instance or two of what you mean."

"We had better keep," said the captain, "to the same instances of which we have already been speaking. Thus, what we call limestone is a more or less pure calcareous earth in combination with a delicate acid, which is familiar to us in the form of a gas. Now, if we place a piece of this stone in diluted sulphuric acid, this will take possession of the lime, and appear with it in the form of gypsum, the gaseous acid at the same time going off in vapour. Here is a case of separation; a combination arises, and we believe ourselves now justified in applying to it the words 'elective affinity;' it really looks as if one relation had been deliberately chosen in preference to another."

"Forgive me," said Charlotte, "as I forgive the natural philosopher. I cannot see any choice in this: I see a natural necessity rather, and scarcely that. After all, it is, perhaps, merely a case of opportunity. Opportunity makes relations as it makes thieves; and, as long as the talk is only of natural substances, the choice appears to me to be altogether in the hands of the chemist who brings the creatures together. Once, however, let them be brought together, and then God have mercy on them. In the present case, I cannot help being sorry for the poor acid gas, which is driven out up and down infinity again."

"The acid's business," answered the captain, "is now

to get connected with water, and so serve as a mineral fountain for the refreshing of both the healthy and sick."

"That is very well for the gypsum to say," said Charlotte. "The gypsum is all right, is a body, is provided for. The other poor, desolate creature may have trouble enough to go through before it can find a second home for itself."

"I am much mistaken," said Edward, smiling, "if there be not some little *arrière pensée* behind this. Confess your wickedness! You mean me by your lime: the lime is laid hold of by the captain, in the form of sulphuric acid, torn away from your agreeable society, and metamorphosed into a refractory gypsum."

"If your conscience prompts you to make such a reflection," replied Charlotte, "I certainly need not distress myself. These comparisons are pleasant and entertaining; and who is there that does not like playing with analogies? But man is raised very many steps above these elements; and, if he has been somewhat liberal with such fine words as 'election' and 'elective affinities,' he will do well to turn back again into himself, and take the opportunity of considering carefully the value and meaning of such expressions. Unhappily, we know cases enough where an apparently indissoluble connection between two persons has, by the accidental introduction of a third, been utterly destroyed, and one or the other of the once happily united pair been driven out into the wilderness."

"Then, you see how much more gallant the chemists are," said Edward. "They at once add a fourth, that neither may go away empty."

"Quite so," replied the captain. "And those are the cases which are really most important and remarkable, — cases where this attraction, this affinity, this separating and combining, can be exhibited, the two pairs severally crossing each other; where four

creatures, connected previously, as two and two, are brought into contact, and at once forsake their first combination to form into a second. In this forsaking and embracing, this seeking and flying, we believe that we are indeed observing the effects of some higher determination: we attribute a sort of will and choice to such creatures, and feel really justified in using technical words, and speaking of 'elective affinities.'"

"Give me an instance of this," said Charlotte.

"Such things ought not to be settled with words," replied the captain. "As I said before, as soon as I can show you the experiment, I can make it all intelligible and pleasant for you. For the present, I can give you nothing but horrible scientific expressions, which at the same time will give you no idea about the matter. You ought yourself to see these substances which seem so dead, and which are yet so full of inward energy and force, at work before your eyes. You should observe them with a real personal interest. Now they seek each other out, attract each other, seize, crush, devour, destroy, each other, and then suddenly reappear again out of their combinations, and come forward in fresh, renovated, unexpected form: thus you will comprehend how we attribute to them a sort of immortality; how we speak of them as having sense and understanding; because we feel our own senses to be insufficient to observe them adequately, and our reason too weak to follow them."

"I grant," said Edward, "that the strange scientific nomenclature, to persons who have not been reconciled to it by a direct acquaintance with or understanding of its object, must seem unpleasant, even ridiculous; but we can easily, just for once, contrive with symbols to illustrate what we are speaking of."

"If you do not think it looks pedantic," answered the captain, "I can put my meaning together with letters. Suppose an A connected so closely with a B

that all sorts of means, even violence, have been made use of to separate them, without effect. Then suppose a C in exactly the same position with respect to D. Bring the two pairs into contact: A will fling himself on D, C on B, without its being possible to say which had first left its first connection, or made the first move toward the second."

"Now, then," interposed Edward, "till we see all this with our eyes, we will look upon the formula as an analogy, out of which we can devise a lesson for immediate use. You stand for A, Charlotte, and I am your B: really and truly I cling to you, I depend on you, and follow you, just as B does with A. C is obviously the captain, who at present is in some degree withdrawing me from you. So now it is only just, that, if you are not to be left to solitude, a D should be found for you; and that is unquestionably the amiable little lady, Ottilie. You will not hesitate any longer to send and fetch her."

"All right," replied Charlotte; "although, in my opinion, the example does not exactly fit our case. However, we have been fortunate, at any rate, in to-day for once having met all together; and these natural or elective affinities have served to unite us more intimately. I will tell you, that, since this afternoon, I have made up my mind to send for Ottilie. My faithful housekeeper, on whom I have hitherto depended for everything, is going to leave me shortly, to be married. This is my motive, as far as *I* am concerned. What has decided me on account of Ottilie, you shall read to me. I will not again look on whilst you are reading. Indeed, the contents of these pages are already known to me. But read, read!"

With these words, she produced a letter, and handed it to Edward.

CHAPTER V.

LETTER OF THE LADY SUPERIOR.

"YOUR ladyship will forgive the brevity of my present letter. The public examinations are but just concluded, and I have to communicate to all the parents and guardians the progress our pupils have made during the past year. I can afford to be brief, having to say much in few words. Your ladyship's daughter has proved herself first, in every sense of the word. The testimonials I enclose, and her own letter, in which she will detail to you the prizes she has won, and the happiness she feels in her success, will surely please, and, I hope, delight you. For myself, it is the less necessary that I should say much, because I see that there will soon be no more occasion to keep with us a young lady so far advanced. I send my respects to your ladyship, and in a short time shall take the liberty of offering you my opinion as to what may be of most advantage to her in future.

"My good assistant will tell you about Ottilie."

LETTER OF THE ASSISTANT.

"Our revered superior leaves it to me to write to you of Ottilie, partly because, with her ways of thinking about it, it would be painful to her to say what has to be said; partly because she herself requires some apology she would rather have me make for her.

"Knowing only too well how little able good Ottilie

is to show out what lies in her, and what she is capable of, I was all along afraid of this public examination. I was the more uneasy, as it was to be of a kind which does not admit of any special preparation; and, even if it had been conducted as usual, Ottilie never can be prepared to make a display. The result has justified my anxiety only too well. She has not received any prize: she is not even amongst those whose names have been mentioned with approbation. I need not go into details. As for handwriting, the letters of the other girls were not so well formed, but their strokes were much more free. In arithmetic they were all quicker than she; and in the more difficult problems, which she does the best, there was no examination. In French she was outshone and out-talked by many; and in history she was not ready with her names and dates. In geography there was a want of attention to the political divisions; and for what she could do in music, there was neither time nor quiet enough for her few modest melodies to gain attention. In drawing she certainly would have gained the prize: her outlines were clear, and the execution most careful and full of spirit; unhappily she had chosen too wide a subject, and had not completed it.

"After the pupils had been dismissed, the examiners consulted together; and we teachers were partially admitted into the council. I very soon observed that of Ottilie nothing was said; or, when her name was mentioned, it was done with indifference, if not with downright disapproval. I hoped to obtain some favour for her by a candid description of what she was; and I ventured it with the greater earnestness, partly because I was only speaking my real convictions, and partly because, when I was young, I had been in the same unfortunate case. I was listened to with attention; but, as soon as I had ended, the presiding examiner said to me very kindly but laconically: 'We presume capa-

bilities: they are to be converted into accomplishments. This is the aim of all education. It is what is distinctly intended by all who have the care of children, and silently and indistinctly by the children themselves. This also is the object of examinations, when both teachers and pupils are on their trial. From what we learn of you, we may entertain good hopes of the young lady: and it is to your own credit also that you have paid so much attention to your pupil's capabilities. If in the coming year you can develop these into accomplishments, neither yourself nor your pupil shall fail to receive your due praise.'

"I had made up my mind to what must follow all this; but there was something worse which I had not anticipated, and which had soon to be added to it. Our good superior, who, resembling a trusty shepherd, could not bear to have one of her flock lost, or, as was the case here, one entrusted to her charge undistinguished, could not, when the examiners were gone, conceal her displeasure, and said to Ottilie, who was quietly standing by the window, while the others were exulting over their prizes, 'Tell me, for heaven's sake! how can a person look so stupid, if she is not so?' Ottilie replied quite calmly, 'Forgive me, my dear mother: I have my headache again to-day, and it is very painful.' Kind and sympathising as she generally is, the superior this time answered, 'Who should know that?' and turned angrily away.

"Now, it is true, no one can believe it; for Ottilie never alters the expression of her countenance, nor have I seen her move her hand to her temple.

"Nor was this all. Your ladyship's daughter, who is at all times sufficiently lively and impetuous, was wild and overbearing after her triumph of to-day. She ran from room to room with her prizes and testimonials, and shook them in Ottilie's face. 'You have come badly off this morning!' she cried. Ottilie replied in

her calm, quiet way, 'This is not the last day of examination.' 'But you will always be the last, for all that!' cried the other, and ran away.

"No one except myself saw that Ottilie was disturbed. She has a way, when she experiences any sharp, unpleasant emotion which she wishes to resist, of showing it in the unequal colour of her face: the left cheek becomes for a moment flushed, while the right turns pale. I perceived this symptom, and could not help saying something. I took our superior aside, and spoke seriously to her about it. The excellent lady acknowledged that she had been wrong. We considered the whole affair, and talked it over at great length together: and, not to weary your ladyship, I will tell you at once the desire with which we concluded; namely, that you will have Ottilie stay with you for awhile. Our reasons you will yourself readily perceive. If you consent, I will say more to you on the manner in which I think she should be treated. Your daughter, we may expect, will soon leave us; and we shall then with pleasure welcome Ottilie back.

"One thing more, which another time I might forget to mention: I have never seen Ottilie eager for anything, or at least ask pressingly for anything; but there have been occasions, however rare, when, on the other hand, she has wished to decline things which had been pressed upon her; and she does it with a gesture which to those who have caught its meaning is irresistible. She raises her hands, presses the palms together, and draws them against her breast, leaning her body a little forward at the same time, and turns such a look on the person urging her, that he will gladly forego what he may have wished of her. If your ladyship ever sees this attitude, as with your treatment of her it is not likely that you will, think of me, and spare Ottilie."

Edward read these letters aloud, not without smiles, and shakes of the head. Naturally, too, there were observations made on the persons and on the position of the affair.

"'Tis well!" Edward cried at last: "it is decided. She is coming. You, my love, are provided for; and now we can get forward with our work. It is becoming highly necessary for me to remove to the right wing, where the captain resides; evenings and mornings are the time for us best to work together: and then you, on your side, will have admirable room for yourself and Ottilie."

Charlotte made no objection, and Edward sketched out the method in which they should live. One of his remarks was, "It is really very polite, on the part of your niece, to be subject to a slight pain on the left side of her head. I have it frequently on the right. If we happen to be afflicted at the same time, and sit opposite one another, I leaning on my right elbow, and she on her left, and our heads turned to opposite sides, and resting on our hands, what a pretty pair of pictures we shall make!"

The captain thought that might be dangerous. "No, no!" cried out Edward. "Only do you, my dear friend, take care of the D; for what will become of B, if poor C is taken away from it?"

"That, I should have thought, would have been evident enough," replied Charlotte.

"And it is, indeed," cried Edward: "he would turn back to his A, to his Alpha and Omega." And he sprung up, and, taking Charlotte in his arms, pressed her to his breast.

CHAPTER VI.

THE carriage which brought Ottilie drove up to the door. Charlotte went out to receive her. The dear girl ran to meet her, threw herself at her feet, and embraced her knees.

"Why such humility?" said Charlotte, a little embarrassed, and endeavouring to raise her from the ground.

"It is not meant for humility," Ottilie answered, without moving from the position in which she had placed herself: "I am only thinking of the time when I could not reach higher than to your knees, and when I had just learned to know how you loved me."

She rose, and Charlotte embraced her warmly. She was introduced to the gentlemen, and was at once treated with especial courtesy as a visitor. Beauty is a welcome guest everywhere. She appeared attentive to the conversation, without taking part in it.

The next morning Edward said to Charlotte, "What an agreeable, entertaining girl she is!"

"Entertaining!" answered Charlotte, with a smile: "why, she has not opened her lips yet."

"Indeed!" said Edward, as he seemed to bethink himself: "that is very strange."

Charlotte had to give the newcomer but a very few hints on the management of the household. Ottilie saw rapidly all the arrangements; and, what was more, she felt them. She comprehended easily what was to be provided for the whole party, and what for each particular member of it. Everything was done with

the utmost punctuality: she knew how to direct, without appearing to be giving orders; and, when any one had left anything undone, she at once set it right herself.

As soon as she had found how much time she would have to spare, she begged Charlotte to divide her hours for her; and to these she adhered exactly. She worked at what was set before her in the way which the assistant had described to Charlotte. They let her alone. It was but seldom that Charlotte interfered. Sometimes she changed her pens for others which had been written with, to teach her to make bolder strokes in her handwriting; but these, she found, would be soon cut sharp and fine again.

The ladies had agreed to speak nothing but French when alone; and Charlotte insisted on it the more, as Ottilie was more talkative, when speaking a foreign language, when she had been told it was her duty to exercise herself in it. In this way she often said more than she seemed to intend. Charlotte was particularly pleased with a description, most complete, but at the same time most charming and amiable, which she gave her one day, by accident, of the school. She soon felt her to be a delightful companion, and hoped to find, ere long, an attached friend in her.

At the same time she looked over again the more early accounts which had been sent her of Ottilie, to refresh her recollection with the opinion the superior and the assistant had formed about her, and compare them with her in her own person. For Charlotte was of opinion that we cannot too quickly become acquainted with the character of those with whom we have to live, that we may know what to expect of them, where we may hope to do anything in the way of improvement with them, and what we must make up our minds, once for all, to tolerate and let alone.

This examination led her to nothing new, indeed;

but much she already knew became of greater meaning and importance. Ottilie's moderation in eating and drinking, for instance, became a real distress to her.

The next thing on which the ladies were employed was Ottilie's toilet. Charlotte wished her to appear in clothes of a richer and more *recherché* sort; and at once the clever, active girl herself cut out the stuff which had been previously sent to her, and, with a very little assistance from others, was able, in a short time, to dress most tastefully. The new fashionable dresses set off her figure. An agreeable person, it is true, will show through all disguises; but we always fancy it looks fresher and more graceful when its peculiarities appear under some new drapery. And thus, from the moment of her first appearance, she became more and more a delight to the eyes of all who beheld her. As the emerald refreshes the sight with its beautiful hues, and exerts, it is said, a beneficent influence on that noble sense: so does human beauty work with far greater potency on both the outward and inward sense; whoever looks upon it is charmed against the breath of evil, and feels in harmony with himself and with the world.

In many ways, therefore, the party had gained by Ottilie's arrival. The captain and Edward kept regularly to the hours, even to the minutes, for their general meeting together. They never kept the others waiting for them, either for dinner or tea, or for their walks; and they were in less haste, especially in the evenings, to leave the table. This did not escape Charlotte's observation: she watched them both, to see whether one, more than the other, was the occasion of it. But she could not perceive any difference. They had both become more companionable. In their conversation they seemed to consider what was best adapted to interest Ottilie, what was most on a level with her capacities and her general knowledge. If she

left the room when they were reading or telling stories, they would wait till she returned. They had grown softer, and altogether more united.

In return for this, Ottilie's anxiety to be of use increased every day: the more she came to understand the house, its inmates, and their circumstances, the more eagerly she entered into everything, caught every look and every motion; half a word, a sound, was enough for her. With her calm attentiveness, and her easy, unexcited activity, she was always the same. Sitting, rising up, going, coming, fetching, carrying, returning to her place again, it was all in the most perfect repose; a constant change, a constant agreeable movement; while, at the same time, she went about so lightly that her step was almost inaudible.

This becoming obligingness in Ottilie gave Charlotte the greatest pleasure. There was one thing, however, which she did not exactly like, of which she had to speak to her. "It is very polite in you," she said one day to her, "when people let anything fall from their hand, to be so quick in stooping and picking it up for them: at the same time, it is a sort of confession that they have a right to require such attention; and, in the world, we are expected to be careful to whom we pay it. I will not prescribe any rule toward women. You are young. To those above you, and older than you, services of this sort are a duty; toward your equals, they are polite; to those younger than yourself and your inferiors, you may show yourself kind and good-natured by such things, — only it is not becoming in a young lady to do them for men."

"I will try to get rid of this habit," replied Ottilie: "I think, however, you will in the meantime forgive me for my want of manners, when I tell you how I came by it. We were taught history at school. I have not retained as much of it as I ought, for I never knew what use I was to make of it; a few little

things, however, made a deep impression upon me, among which was the following: when Charles the First of England was standing before his so-called judges, the gold top came off the stick which he had in his hand, and fell down. Accustomed as he had been on such occasions to have everything done for him, he seemed to look around, and expect that this time, too, some one would do him this little service. No one stirred, and he stooped down for it himself. It struck me as so piteous, that from that moment I have never been able to see any one let a thing fall, without picking it up myself. But of course, as it is not always proper, and as I cannot," she continued, smiling, "tell my story every time I do it, in future I will try and contain myself."

In the meantime the fine arrangements the two friends had been led to make for themselves went uninterruptedly forward. Every day they found something new to think about and undertake.

One day as they were walking together through the village, they had to remark with dissatisfaction how far behindhand it was in order and cleanliness, compared to villages where the inhabitants were compelled by the expense of building-ground to be careful about such things.

"You remember a wish we once expressed when we were travelling in Switzerland together," said the captain, "that we might have the laying out some country park, and how beautiful we would make it by introducing into some village situated like this, not the Swiss style of building, but the Swiss order and neatness which so much improve it."

"And how well it would answer here! The hill on which the castle stands slopes down to that projecting angle. The village, you see, is built in a semicircle, regularly enough, just opposite to it. The brook runs between. It is liable to floods; and do observe the

way the people set about protecting themselves from them: one with stones, another with stakes; the next puts up a boarding, and a fourth tries beams and planks; no one, of course, doing any good to another with his arrangement, but only hurting himself and the rest too. And then, there is the road going along just in the clumsiest way possible, — up hill and down, through the water, and over the stones. If the people would only lay their hands to the business together, it would cost them nothing but a little labour to run a semicircular wall along here, take the road in behind it, raising it to the level of the houses, and so give themselves a fair open space in front, making the whole place clean, and getting rid, once for all, in one good general work, of all their little trifling ineffectual makeshifts."

"Let us try it," said the captain, as he ran his eyes over the lay of the ground, and saw quickly what was to be done.

"I can undertake nothing in company with peasants and shopkeepers," replied Edward, "unless I may have unrestricted authority over them."

"You are not so wrong in that," returned the captain: "I have experienced too much trouble myself in life in matters of that kind. How difficult it is to prevail on a man to venture boldly on making a sacrifice for an after-advantage! How hard to get him to desire an end, and not to disdain the means! So many people confuse means with ends: they keep hanging over the first, without having the other before their eyes. Every evil is to be cured at the place where it comes to the surface; and they will not trouble themselves to look for the cause which produces it, or the remote effect which results from it. This is why it is so difficult to get advice listened to, especially among the many: they can see clearly enough from day to day, but their scope seldom reaches beyond the mor-

row; and, if it comes to a point where with some general arrangement one person will gain while another will lose, there is no prevailing on them to strike a balance. Works of public advantage can only be carried through by an uncontrolled absolute authority."

While they were standing and talking, a man came up begging. He looked more impudent than if he were really in want; and Edward, who was annoyed at being interrupted, after two or three fruitless attempts to get rid of him by a gentler refusal, spoke sharply to him. The fellow began to grumble and mutter abusively: he went off with short steps, talking about the right of beggars. It was all very well to refuse them an alms, but that was no reason why they should be insulted. A beggar, and everybody else too, was as much under God's protection as a lord. It put Edward out of all patience.

The captain, to pacify him, said, "Let us make use of this as an occasion for extending our rural police arrangements to such cases. We are bound to give away money; but we do better in not giving it in person, especially at home. We should be moderate and uniform in everything, in our charities as in all else: too great liberality attracts beggars instead of helping them on their way. At the same time, there is no harm when one is on a journey, or passing through a strange place, in appearing to a poor man in the street in the form of a chance deity of fortune, and making him some present which shall surprise him. The position of the village and of the castle makes it easy for us to put our charities here on a proper footing. I have thought about it before. The public-house is at one end of the village, a respectable old couple live at the other. At each of these places deposit a small sum of money; and let every beggar, not as he comes in, but as he goes out, receive something. Both houses lie on the roads which lead to the

castle, so that any one who goes there can be referred to one or the other."

"Come," said Edward, "we will settle that on the spot. The exact sum can be made up another time."

They went to the innkeeper, and to the old couple; and the thing was done.

"I know very well," Edward said, as they were walking up the hill to the castle together, "that everything in this world depends on distinctness of idea, and firmness of purpose. Your judgment of what my wife has been doing in the park was entirely right, and you have already given me a hint how it might be improved. I will not deny that I told her of it."

"So I have been led to suspect," replied the captain, "and I could not approve of your having done so. You have perplexed her. She has left off doing anything, and on this one subject she is vexed with us. She avoids speaking of it. She has never since invited us to go with her to the summer-house, although at odd hours she goes up there with Ottilie."

"We must not allow ourselves to be deterred by that," answered Edward. "If I am once convinced about anything good, which could and should be done, I can never rest till I see it done. We are clever enough at other times in introducing what we want into the general conversation: suppose we have out some descriptions of English parks, with copperplates, for our evening's amusement. Then we can follow with your plan. We will treat it first problematically, and as if we were only in jest. There will be no difficulty in passing into earnest."

The scheme was concerted, and the books were opened. In each group of designs they first saw a ground plan of the spot, with the general character of the landscape, drawn in its rude, natural state. Then followed others, showing the changes which had been produced by art, to employ and set off the natural

"The chant . . . was brought and spread out"

Photogravure from a painting by F. Simon

advantages of the locality. From these to their own property and their own grounds the transition was easy.

Everybody was pleased. The chart which the captain had sketched was brought and spread out. The only difficulty was, that they could not entirely free themselves of the plan in which Charlotte had begun. However, an easier way up the hill was found: a lodge was suggested to be built on the height at the edge of the cliff, which was to have an especial reference to the castle. It was to form a conspicuous object from the castle windows; and from it the spectator was to be able to overlook both the castle and the garden.

The captain had carefully considered it all, and taken his measurements; and now he brought up again the village road and the wall by the brook, and the ground which was to be raised behind it.

"Here you see," said he, "while I make this charming walk up the height, I gain exactly the quantity of stone which I require for that wall. Let one piece of work help the other, and both will be carried out most satisfactorily and most rapidly."

"But now," said Charlotte, "comes my side of the business. A certain definite outlay of money will have to be made. We ought to know how much will be wanted for such a purpose, and then we can apportion it out: so much work, and so much money, if not by weeks, at least by months. The cash-box is under my charge. I pay the bills, and I keep the accounts."

"You do not appear to have overmuch confidence in us," said Edward.

"I have not much in arbitrary matters," Charlotte answered. "Where it is a case of inclination, we women know better how to control ourselves than you."

It was settled: the dispositions were made, and the work was begun at once.

The captain being always on the spot, Charlotte was an almost daily witness of the strength and clearness of his understanding. He, too, learned to know her better; and it became easy for them both to work together, and thus bring something to completeness. It is with work as with dancing, — persons who keep the same step must grow indispensable to one another. Out of this a mutual kindly feeling will necessarily arise; and that Charlotte had a real kind feeling toward the captain, after she came to know him better, was sufficiently proved by her allowing him to destroy her pretty seat, — which in her first plans she had taken such pains in ornamenting, — because it was in the way of his own, without experiencing the slightest feeling about the matter.

CHAPTER VII.

Now that Charlotte was occupied with the captain, it was a natural consequence that Edward should attach himself more to Ottilie. Independently of this, indeed, for some time past he had begun to feel a silent kind of attraction toward her. Obliging and attentive she was to every one, but his self-love whispered that toward him she was particularly so. She had observed his little fancies about his food. She knew exactly what things he liked, and the way in which he liked them to be prepared; the quantity of sugar which he liked in his tea, and so on. Moreover, she was particularly careful to prevent draughts, about which he was excessively sensitive; and, indeed, about which with his wife, who could never have air enough, he was often at variance. So, too, she had come to know about fruit-gardens and flower-gardens; whatever he liked, it was her constant effort to procure for him, and to keep away whatever annoyed him; so that very soon she grew indispensable to him: she became like his guardian angel, and he felt it keenly whenever she was absent. Besides all this, too, she appeared to become more open and talkative as soon as they were alone together.

Edward, as he advanced in life, had retained something childish about himself, which corresponded singularly well with the youthfulness of Ottilie. They liked talking of early times, when they had first seen each other; and these reminiscences led them up to the first epoch of Edward's affection for Charlotte. Ottilie declared that she remembered them both as the

handsomest pair at court; and when Edward would question the possibility of this, when she must have been so exceedingly young, she insisted that she recollected one particular incident as clearly as possible. He had come into the room where her aunt was; and she had hid her face in Charlotte's lap, not from fear, but from a childish surprise. She might have added, because he had made so strong an impression upon her, — because she had liked him so much.

While they were occupied in this way, much of the business which the two friends had undertaken together had come to a standstill; so that they found it necessary to inspect how things were going on, — to work up a few designs and get letters written. For this purpose, they betook themselves to their office, where they found their old copyist at his desk. They set to work, and soon gave the old man enough to do, without observing that they were laying many things on his shoulders which at other times they had always done for themselves. At the same time, the first design the captain tried would not answer; and Edward was as unsuccessful with his first letter. They fretted for awhile, planning and erasing; till at last Edward, who was getting on the worst, asked what o'clock it was. And then it appeared that the captain had forgotten, for the first time for many years, to wind up his chronometer; and they seemed, if not to feel, at least to have a dim perception, that time was beginning to be indifferent to them.

In the meanwhile, as the gentlemen were thus rather slackening in their energy, the activity of the ladies increased all the more. The every-day life of a family, composed of a given number of persons, is shaped out of necessary circumstances, may easily receive into itself an extraordinary affection, an incipient passion, — may receive it into itself as into a vessel; and a long time may elapse before the new ingredient pro-

duces a visible effervescence, and runs foaming over the edge.

With our friends, the feelings which were mutually arising had the most agreeable effects. Their dispositions opened out, and a general good-will arose out of the several individual affections. Every member of the party was happy, and they each shared their happiness with the rest.

Such a temper elevates the spirit while it enlarges the heart; and everything which, under the influence of it, people do and undertake, has a tendency toward the illimitable. The friends could no longer remain shut up at home: their walks extended themselves farther and farther. Edward would hurry on before with Ottilie, to choose the path or pioneer the way; and the captain and Charlotte would follow quietly on the track of their more hasty precursors, talking on some grave subject, or delighting themselves with some spot they had newly discovered, or some unexpected natural beauty.

One day their walk led them down from the gate at the right wing of the castle, in the direction of the hotel, and thence over the bridge toward the ponds, along the sides of which they proceeded as far as it was generally thought possible to follow the water; thickly wooded hills sloping directly up from the edge, and beyond these a wall of steep rocks, making farther progress difficult, if not impossible. But Edward, whose hunting experience had made him thoroughly familiar with the spot, pushed forward along an overgrown path with Ottilie, knowing well that the old mill could not be far off, which was somewhere in the middle of the rocks there. The path was so little frequented, that they soon lost it; and for a short time they were wandering among mossy stones and thickets: it was not for long, however; the noise of the water-wheel speedily telling them that the

place which they were looking for was close at hand. Stepping forward on a point of rock, they saw the strange, old, dark wooden building in the hollow before them, quite shadowed over with precipitous crags and huge trees. They determined without hesitation to descend across the moss and the blocks of stone. Edward led the way; and when he looked back and saw Ottilie following, stepping lightly, without fear or nervousness, from stone to stone, so beautifully balancing herself, he fancied he was looking at some celestial creature floating above him: while if, as she often did, she caught the hand which in some difficult spot he would offer her, or if she supported herself on his shoulder, then he was left in no doubt that it was a very exquisite human creature who touched him. He almost wished that she might slip or stumble, that he might catch her in his arms and press her to his heart. This, however, he would under no circumstances have done, for more than one reason. He was afraid to wound her, and he was afraid to do her some bodily injury.

What the meaning of this could be, we shall immediately learn. When they had got down, and were seated opposite each other at a table under the trees, and when the miller's wife had gone for milk, and the miller, who had come out to them, was sent to meet Charlotte and the captain, Edward, with a little embarrassment, began to speak.

"I have a request to make, dear Ottilie: you will forgive me for asking it, if you will not grant it. You make no secret (I am sure you need not make any) that you wear a miniature under your dress against your breast. It is the picture of your noble father, whom you hardly ever knew; but in every sense he deserves a place by your heart. But, excuse me, the picture is much too large; and the metal frame and the glass, if you take up a child in your arms, if you

are carrying anything, if the carriage swings violently, if we are pushing through bushes, or just now, as we were coming down these rocks, make me extremely anxious on your account. Any unforeseen blow, a fall, a touch, may be fatally injurious to you; and I am terrified at the possibility of it. For my sake do this: put away the picture, not out of your affections, not out of your room; let it have the brightest, the holiest place which you can give it; only do not wear upon your breast a thing the presence of which seems to me, perhaps from an extravagant anxiety, so dangerous."

Ottilie was silent: while he was speaking, she had kept her eyes fixed straight before her; then, without hesitation and without haste, with a look turned more toward heaven than on Edward, she unclasped the chain, drew out the picture, and pressed it against her forehead, and then reached it over to her friend, with the words:

"Keep it for me till we get home: I cannot give you a better proof how deeply I thank you for your affectionate care."

He did not venture to press the picture to his lips; but he seized her hand, and raised it to his eyes. They were perhaps two of the most beautiful hands which had ever been clasped together. He felt as if a stone had fallen from his heart, as if a partition-wall had been thrown down between him and Ottilie.

Under the miller's guidance, Charlotte and the captain came down by an easier path, and now joined them. There was the meeting, and a happy talk; and then they took some refreshments. They would not return by the same way as they came; and Edward struck into a rocky path on the other side of the stream, from which the ponds were again to be seen. They made their way along it with some effort, and then had to cross a variety of wood and copse, getting glimpses,

on the land side, of a number of villages, and manor-houses with their green lawns and fruit-gardens; while very near them, and sweetly situated on a rising ground, a farm lay in the middle of the wood. From a gentle ascent, they had a view before and behind which showed them the richness of the country to the greatest advantage; and then, entering a grove of trees, they found themselves, on again emerging from it, on the rock opposite the castle.

They came upon it rather unexpectedly, and were of course delighted. They had made the circuit of a little world: they were standing on the spot where the new building was to be erected, and were looking again at the windows of their own home.

They went down to the summer-house, and sat all four in it for the first time together: nothing was more natural than that with one voice it should be proposed to have the way they had been that day, and which, as it was, had taken them much time and trouble, properly laid out and gravelled, so that people might loiter along it at their leisure. They each said what they thought; and they reckoned up that the circuit, over which they had taken many hours, might be travelled easily, with a good road all the way round to the castle, in a single one.

Already a plan was being suggested for shortening the distance, and adding a fresh beauty to the landscape, by throwing a bridge across the stream, below the mill, where it ran into the lake, when Charlotte brought their inventive imagination somewhat to a standstill by putting them in mind of the expense which such an undertaking would involve.

"There are ways of meeting that too," replied Edward; "we have only to dispose of that farm in the forest, which is so pleasantly situated, and which brings in so little in the way of rent: the sum which will be set free will more than cover what we shall re-

quire; and thus, having gained an invaluable walk, we shall receive the interest of well-expended capital in substantial enjoyment, instead of, as now, in the summing up at the end of the year, vexing and fretting ourselves over the pitiful little income which is returned for it."

Even Charlotte, with all her prudence, had little to urge against this. There had been, indeed, a previous intention of selling the farm. The captain was ready immediately with a plan for breaking up the ground into small portions among the peasantry of the forest. Edward, however, had a simpler and shorter way of managing it. His present steward had already proposed to take it off his hands: he was to pay for it by instalments, and so gradually, as the money came in, they would get their work forward from point to point.

So reasonable and prudent a scheme was sure of universal approbation; and they began already in prospect to see their new walk winding along its way, and to imagine the many beautiful views and charming spots which they hoped to discover in its neighbourhood.

To bring it all before them with greater fulness of detail, in the evening they produced the new chart. With the help of this they went over again the way that they had come, and found various places where the walk might take a rather different direction with advantage. Their other scheme was now once more talked through, and connected with the fresh design. The site for the new house in the park, opposite the castle, was a second time examined into and approved, and fixed upon for the termination of the intended circuit.

Ottilie had said nothing all this time. At length Edward pushed the chart, which had hitherto been lying before Charlotte, across to her, begging her to give her opinion: she still hesitated for a moment.

Edward in his gentlest way again pressed her to let them know what she thought: nothing had as yet been settled, it was all as yet in embryo.

"I would have the house built here," she said, as she pointed with her finger to the highest point of the slope on the hill. "It is true you cannot see the castle from there, for it is hidden by the wood; but for that very reason you find yourself in another quite new world: you lose village and houses and all at the same time. The view of the ponds, with the mill, and the hills and mountains in the distance, is singularly beautiful. I noticed it when passing."

"She is right!" Edward cried: "how could we have overlooked it? This is what you mean, Ottilie, is it not?" He took a lead-pencil, and drew a great black rectangular figure on the summit of the hill.

It pierced the captain's soul to see his carefully and clearly drawn chart disfigured in such a way. He collected himself, however, after a slight expression of his disapproval, and took up the idea. "Ottilie is right," he said: "we are ready enough to walk any distance to drink tea or eat fish, because they would not have tasted as well at home: we require change of scene and change of objects. Your ancestors showed their judgment in choosing this spot for their castle; for it is sheltered from the wind, with the conveniences of life close at hand. A place, on the contrary, which is more for pleasure-parties than for a regular residence would do very well there; and in the fair time of the year the most agreeable hours may be spent in it."

The more they talked it over, the more conclusive was their judgment in favour of Ottilie; and Edward could not conceal his triumph that the thought had been hers. He was as proud as if he had hit upon it himself.

CHAPTER VIII.

EARLY the following morning, the captain examined the spot. He first threw off a sketch of what should be done; and afterward, when the thing had been more completely decided on, he made a complete design, with accurate calculations and measurements. It cost him a good deal of labour, and the business connected with the sale of the farm had to be gone into: so that both the gentlemen now found a fresh impulse to activity.

The captain made Edward observe that it would be proper, indeed that it would be a kind of duty, to celebrate Charlotte's birthday with laying the foundation-stone. Not much was wanted to overcome Edward's disinclination for such festivities; for he quickly recollected, that, a little later, Ottilie's birthday would follow, and that he could have a magnificent celebration for that.

Charlotte, to whom all this work and what it would involve was a subject for much serious and almost anxious thought, busied herself in carefully going through the time and outlay which it was calculated would be expended on it. During the day they rarely saw each other: so that the evening meeting was looked forward to with all the more anxiety.

Ottilie was, in the meantime, complete mistress of the household; and how could it be otherwise, with her quick, methodical ways of working? Indeed, her whole mode of thought was suited better to home-life than to the world, and to a more free existence. Ed-

ward soon observed that she only walked about with them out of a desire to please; that, when she stayed out late with them in the evening, it was because she thought it a sort of social duty; and that she would often find a pretext in some household matter for going in again, — consequently, he soon managed so to arrange the walks they took together, that they should be at home before sunset; and he began again, what he had long left off, to read aloud poetry, particularly such as had for its subject the expression of a pure but passionate love.

They ordinarily sat in the evening in the same places round a small table. — Charlotte on the sofa, Ottilie on a chair opposite to her, and the gentlemen on each side. Ottilie's place was on Edward's right, the side where he put the candle when he was reading: at such times she would draw her chair a little nearer, to look over him; for Ottilie also trusted her own eyes better than another person's lips; and Edward would then always make a move toward her, that it might be as easy as possible for her, — indeed, he would frequently make longer stops than necessary, that he might not turn over before she had got to the bottom of the page.

Charlotte and the captain observed this, and would often look at each other, smiling; but they were both taken by surprise at another symptom, in which Ottilie's latent feeling accidentally displayed itself.

One evening, which had been partly spoiled for them by a tedious visit, Edward proposed that they should not separate so early, — he felt inclined for music, — he would take his flute, which he had not done for many days past. Charlotte looked for the sonatas they generally played together, and they were not to be found. Ottilie, with some hesitation, said she had taken them to her room.

"And you can, you will, accompany me on the piano?" cried Edward, his eyes sparkling with pleas-

ure. "I think perhaps I can," Ottilie answered. She brought the music, and sat down to the instrument. The others listened, and were sufficiently surprised to hear how perfectly Ottilie had taught herself the piece; but far more surprised were they at the way in which she contrived to adapt herself to Edward's style of playing. Adapt herself is not the right expression: Charlotte's skill and power enabled her, in order to please her husband, to keep up with him when he played too fast, and hold in for him if he hesitated; but Ottilie, who had several times heard them play the sonata together, seemed to have learned it according to the idea in which they accompanied each other: she had so completely made his defects her own, that a kind of living whole resulted from it, which did not move, indeed, according to exact rule; but the effect of it was in the highest degree pleasant and delightful. The composer himself would have been pleased to hear his work disfigured in so charming a manner.

Charlotte and the captain watched this strange, unexpected occurrence in silence, with the kind of feeling with which we often observe the actions of children, — unable, exactly, to approve of them, from the serious consequences which may follow, and yet without being able to find fault, perhaps with a kind of envy. For, indeed, the regard of these two for one another was growing also, as well as that of the others; and it was, perhaps, only the more perilous because they were both more staid, more certain of themselves, and better able to restrain themselves.

The captain had already begun to feel that a habit he could not resist was threatening to bind him to Charlotte. He forced himself to stay away at the hour when she commonly used to be at the works; by getting up very early in the morning, he contrived to finish there whatever he had to do, and retired to the

castle, in order to work in his own room. The first day or two Charlotte thought it was an accident: she looked for him in every place where she thought he might possibly be. Then she thought she understood him, and admired him all the more.

Avoiding, as the captain now did, being alone with Charlotte, the more industriously did he labour to hurry forward the preparations for keeping her rapidly approaching birthday with all splendour. While he was bringing up the new road from below, behind the village, he made the men, under pretence that he wanted stones, begin working at the top as well, and work down, to meet the others: and he had calculated his arrangements so that the two should exactly meet on the eve of the day. The excavations for the new house were already done: the rock was blown away with gunpowder; and a fair foundation-stone had been hewn, with a hollow chamber, and a flat slab adjusted to cover it.

This outward activity, these little mysterious purposes of friendship, prompted by feelings they were obliged to repress more or less, rather prevented the little party when together from being as lively as usual. Edward, who felt that there was a sort of void, one evening called upon the captain to fetch his violin, — Charlotte should play the piano, and he should accompany her. The captain was unable to refuse the general request; and they executed together one of the most difficult pieces of music with an ease and freedom and feeling which could not but afford themselves, and the two who were listening to them, the greatest delight. They promised themselves a frequent repetition of it, as well as further practice together. "They do it better than we, Ottilie," said Edward: "we will admire them — but we can enjoy ourselves together, too."

CHAPTER IX.

THE birthday had come, and everything was ready. The wall was all complete which protected the raised village road against the water, and so was the walk: passing the church, for a short time it followed the path which had been laid out by Charlotte, and then, winding upwards among the rocks, inclined first under the summer-house to the right, and then, after a wide sweep, passed back above it to the right again, and so by degrees out on to the summit.

A large party had assembled for the occasion. They went first to church, where they found the whole congregation collected together in their holiday dresses. After service, they filed out in order: first the boys, then the young men, then the old; after them came the party from the castle, with their visitors and retinue; and the village maidens, young girls, and women brought up the rear.

At the turn of the walk, a raised stone seat had been contrived, where the captain made Charlotte and the visitors stop and rest. From here they could look over the whole distance from the beginning to the end, — the troops of men who had gone up before them, the file of women following, and now drawing up to where they were. It was lovely weather, and the whole effect was singularly beautiful. Charlotte was taken by surprise: she was touched, and she pressed the captain's hand warmly.

They followed the crowd, who had slowly ascended, and were now forming a circle round the spot where

the future house was to stand. The lord of the castle, his family, and the principal strangers were now invited to descend into the vault, where the foundation-stone, supported on one side, lay ready to be let down. A well-dressed mason, a trowel in one hand and a hammer in the other, came forward, and, with much grace, spoke an address in verse, of which in prose we can give but an imperfect rendering.

"Three things," he began, "are to be looked to in a building: that it stand on the right spot, that it be securely founded, that it be successfully executed. The first is the business of the master of the house, — his, and his only. As in the city the prince and the council alone determine where a building shall be: so in the country it is the right of the lord of the soil that he shall say, 'Here my dwelling shall stand, — here, and nowhere else.'"

Edward and Ottilie were standing opposite one another as these words were spoken, but they did not venture to look up and exchange glances.

"To the third, the execution, there is neither art nor handicraft which must not in some way contribute. But the second, the founding, is the province of the mason; and, boldly to speak it out, it is the head and front of all the undertaking. A solemn thing it is, and our bidding you descend hither is full of meaning. You are celebrating your festival in the depth of the earth. Here, within this narrow excavation, you show us the honour of appearing as witnesses of our mysterious craft. Presently we shall lower down this carefully hewn stone into its place; and soon these earth walls, now ornamented with fair and worthy persons, will be no more accessible, but will be closed in for ever.

"This foundation-stone, which with its angles typifies the just angles of the building; with the sharpness of its moulding, the regularity of it; and with the truth of its lines to the horizonal and perpendicular,

the uprightness and equal height of all the walls, — we might now without more ado let down: it would rest in its place with its own weight. But even here there shall not fail of lime and means to bind it. For as human beings, who may be well inclined to each other by nature, yet hold more firmly together when the law cements them: so are stones also, whose forms may already fit together, united far better by these binding forces. It is not seemly to be idle amidst the busy, and here you will not refuse to be our fellow labourer." With these words he reached the trowel to Charlotte, who threw mortar with it under the stone; several of the others were then desired to do the same, and then it was at once let fall. Upon which the hammer was placed next in Charlotte's, and then in the others', hands, to strike three times with it, and conclude, in this expression, the union of the stone with the soil.

"The work of the mason," the speaker continued, "now under the free sky as we are, if it be not done in concealment, yet must pass into concealment; the soil will be laid smoothly in, and thrown over this stone; and, with the walls which we rear into the daylight, we in the end are seldom remembered. The works of the stone-cutter and the carver remain under the eyes: but for us it is not to complain when the plasterer blots out the last trace of our hands, and appropriates our work to himself; when he overlays, smooths, and colours it.

"Not from regard for the opinion of others, but from respect for himself, the mason will be faithful in his calling. There is no one who has more need to feel in himself the consciousness of what he is. When the house has been erected, when the soil is levelled, and the surface paved, and the outside all overwrought with ornament, he can even see in yet through all disguises, and still recognise those exact and careful

adjustments to which the whole is indebted for its existence and support.

"But as the man who commits some evil deed has to fear, that, notwithstanding all precautions, it will one day come to light: so too must he expect who has done some good thing in secret, that it also, in spite of him, will appear in the day; and therefore we make this foundation-stone at the same time a memorial-stone. Here, in these various cavities which have been hewn into it, many things are now to be buried, to bear witness to distant posterity. These metal cases hermetically sealed contain documents in writing; matters of various note are engraved on these plates; in these beautiful glass bottles we bury the best old wine, with the date of its vintage. We have coins, too, of many kinds, from the mint of the current year. All this we have received through the liberality of him for whom we build. There is still some space left, if any guest or spectator desire to offer something for posterity."

After a slight pause the speaker looked round: but, as is commonly the case on such occasions, no one was prepared; they were all taken by surprise. At last, a merry-looking young officer set the example, and said, "If I am to contribute anything, which as yet is not to be found in this treasure-chamber, it shall be a pair of buttons from my uniform. — I don't see why they do not deserve to go down to posterity!" No sooner said than done, and then a number of persons found something of the same sort which they could do: the young ladies did not hesitate to throw in some of their side hair-combs; smelling-bottles and other trinkets were not spared. Only Ottilie hung back, till a kind word from Edward roused her from the abstraction in which she was watching the various things being heaped in. Then she unclasped from her neck the gold chain on which her father's picture had hung, and with a light,

gentle hand laid it down on the other jewels. Edward rather disarranged the proceedings by at once, in some haste, having the cover let fall, and fastened down.

The young journeyman mason who had been most active through all this, again took his place as orator, and went on, "We lay down this stone for ever, for the establishing the present and the future possessors of this house. But in that we bury this treasure together with it, we do it in the remembrance — in this most enduring of works — of the perishableness of all human things. We remember that a time may come when this lid so firmly sealed shall again be lifted; and that can only be when all shall again be destroyed, which as yet we have not brought into being.

"But now — now that at once it may begin to be, back with our thoughts out of the future, — back into the present. At once, after the feast which we have this day kept together, let us on with our labour: let no one of all those trades which are to work on our foundation, through us keep unwilling holiday. Let the building rise swiftly to its height; and, from the windows which as yet have no existence, may the master of the house, his family, and guests look forth with a glad heart over his broad lands. To him and to all here present herewith be health and happiness."

With these word he drained a richly cut tumbler at a draught, and flung it into the air, thereby to signify the excess of pleasure by destroying the vessel which had served for such a solemn occasion. This time, however, it fell out otherwise. The glass did not fall back to the earth, and indeed without a miracle.

In order to get forward with the buildings, they had already excavated the whole ground at the opposite corner; indeed, they had begun to raise the wall, and, for this purpose, reared a scaffold as high as was absolutely necessary. On the occasion of the festival, boards had been laid along the top of this; and a num-

ber of spectators were allowed to stand there. It had been meant principally for the advantage of the workmen themselves. The glass had flown up there, and had been caught by one of them, who took it as a sign of good luck for himself. He waved it round without letting it go from his hand; and the letters E and O were to be seen very richly cut upon it, running one into the other. It was one of the glasses which had been made to order for Edward when he was a boy.

The scaffoldings were again deserted; and the most active among the party climbed up to look round, and could not say enough in praise of the beauty of the prospect on all sides. How many new discoveries a person makes when, on some high point, he ascends a somewhat higher eminence. Inland many fresh villages came in sight. The line of the river could be traced like a thread of silver; indeed, one of the party thought that he distinguished the spires of the capital. On the other side, behind the wooded hill, the blue peaks of the far-off mountains were seen rising; and the country immediately about them was spread out like a map.

"If the three ponds," cried some one, "were but thrown together to make a single sheet of water, there would be everything here which is noblest and most excellent."

"That might easily be effected," the captain said. "In early times they must have formed all one lake among the hills here."

"Only I must beseech you to spare my clump of plane-trees and poplars that stand so prettily by the centre pond," said Edward. "Look," he said, turning to Ottilie, bringing her a few steps forward, and pointing down, "those trees I planted myself."

"How long have they been standing there?" asked Ottilie.

"Just about as long as you have been in the world,"

replied Edward. "Yes, my dear child, I planted them when you were still lying in your cradle."

The party now betook themselves back to the castle. When dinner was over, they were invited to walk through the village to take a glance at what had been done there as well. At a hint from the captain, the inhabitants had collected in front of the houses. They were not standing in rows, but formed in natural family groups, partly occupied at their evening work, partly enjoying themselves on the new benches. They had determined, as an agreeable duty which they imposed upon themselves, to have everything in its present order and cleanliness, at least every Sunday and holiday.

A small party, held together by such feelings as had grown up among our friends, is always unpleasantly interrupted by a large concourse of people. All four were delighted to find themselves again alone in the large drawing-room; but this sense of home was a little disturbed by a letter which was brought to Edward, giving notice of fresh guests who were to arrive the following day.

"It is as we supposed," Edward cried to Charlotte. "The count will not stay away; he is coming to-morrow."

"Then, the baroness, too, is not far off," answered Charlotte.

"Doubtless not," said Edward. "She is coming, too, to-morrow, from another place. They only beg to be allowed to stay for a night: the next day they will go on together."

"We must prepare for them in time, Ottilie," said Charlotte.

"What arrangement shall I desire to be made?" Ottilie asked.

Charlotte gave a general direction, and Ottilie left the room.

The captain inquired in what relation these two persons stood toward one another, and with which he was only very generally acquainted. They had some time before, both being already married, fallen violently in love with one another: a double marriage was not to be interfered with without attracting attention. A divorce was proposed. On the baroness's side it could be effected, on that of the count it could not. They were obliged seemingly to separate, but their position toward one another remained unchanged; and though in winter at the Residence they were unable to be together, they indemnified themselves in summer, while making tours and staying at watering-places.

They were both slightly older than Edward and Charlotte, and had been intimate with them from early times at court. The connection had never been absolutely broken off, although it was impossible to approve of their proceedings. On the present occasion, their coming was most unwelcome to Charlotte; and, if she had looked closely into her reasons for feeling it so, she would have found it was on account of Ottilie. The poor, innocent girl should not have been brought so early in contact with such an example.

"It would have been just as well if they had not come till a couple of days later," Edward was saying, as Ottilie reëntered, "till we had finished with this business of the farm. The deed of sale is complete. One copy of it I have here; but we want a second, and our old clerk has fallen ill." The captain offered his services, and so did Charlotte; but there was something or other to object to both of them.

"Give it to me," cried Ottilie, a little hastily.

"You will never be able to finish it," said Charlotte.

"And really I must have it early the day after tomorrow, and it is long," Edward added.

"It shall be ready," Ottilie cried; and the paper was already in her hands.

The next morning, as they were looking out from their highest windows for their visitors, whom they intended to go some way and meet, Edward said, "Who is that yonder, slowly riding along the road?"

The captain described accurately the figure of the horseman.

"Then, it is he," said Edward: "the particulars, which you can see better than I, agree very well with the general figure, which I can see too. It is Mittler; but what is he doing, coming riding at such a pace as that?"

The figure came nearer, and Mittler it veritably was. They received him with warm greetings, as he came slowly up the steps.

"Why did you not come yesterday?" Edward cried, as he approached.

"I do not like your grand festivities," answered he; "but I have come to-day to keep my friend's birthday with you quietly."

"How are you able to find time enough?" asked Edward, with a laugh.

"My visit, if you can value it, you owe to an observation I made yesterday. I was spending a right happy afternoon in a house where I had established peace, and then I heard that a birthday was being kept here. 'Now, this is what I call selfish, after all,' said I to myself: 'you will only enjoy yourself with those whose broken peace you have mended. Why cannot you, for once, go and be happy with friends who keep the peace for themselves?' No sooner said than done. Here I am, as I determined with myself that I would be."

"Yesterday you would have met a large party here: to-day you will find but a small one," said Charlotte. "You will meet the count and the baroness, with whom you have had enough to do already, I believe."

Out of the middle of the party, who had all four come down to welcome him, the strange man dashed

in the keenest disgust, seizing, at the same time, his hat and whip. "Some unlucky star is always over me," he cried, "directly I try to rest and enjoy myself. What business have I going out of my proper character? I ought never to have come, and now I am expelled. Under one roof with those two I will not remain, and you take care of yourselves. They bring nothing but mischief. Their nature is like leaven, and propagates its own contagion."

They tried to pacify him, but it was in vain. "Whoever strikes at marriage," he cried, — "whoever, either by word or deed, undermines this, the foundation of all moral society, that man has to settle with me; and, if I cannot become his master, I take care to settle myself out of his way. Marriage is the beginning and end of all culture. It makes the savage mild, and the most cultivated has no better opportunity for displaying his gentleness. Indissoluble it must be, because it brings so much happiness that what small, exceptional unhappiness it may bring counts for nothing in the balance. And what do men mean by talking of unhappiness? All men have, at times, fits of impatience, when they fancy themselves unhappy. Let them wait till the moment is gone by, and then they will bless their good fortune that what has stood so long continues standing. There never can be any adequate ground for separation. The condition of man is pitched so high, in its joys and in its sorrows, that what a married couple owe to one another defies calculation. It is an infinite debt, which can only be discharged through all eternity.

"Its annoyances marriage may often have: I can well believe that, and it is as it should be. We are all married to our consciences, and there are times when we should be glad to be divorced from them. Mine gives me more annoyance than ever a man or a woman can give."

Such were his words, uttered with great vivacity; and he would very likely have gone on speaking, had not the sound of the postilions' horns announced the arrival of the visitors, who, as if by a preconcerted arrangement, at the same moment drove into the castle courtyard from opposite sides. Mittler slipped away as their host hastened to receive them, and, desiring that his horse might be brought out immediately, rode angrily off.

CHAPTER X.

THE visitors were welcomed, and brought in. They were delighted to find themselves again in the same house and in the same rooms where in early times they had passed many happy days, but which they had not seen for a long time. Their friends, too, were very glad to see them. Both the count and the baroness had those tall, fine figures, which please in middle life almost better than in youth. For, although their first bloom had somewhat faded, there was an air in their appearance which was always irresistibly attractive. Their manners, too, were thoroughly charming. Their free way of taking hold of life, and dealing with it, their mirthfulness, apparent ease, and freedom from embarrassment, communicated itself at once to the rest; and a lighter atmosphere hung about the whole party, without their having observed it stealing on them.

The effect was immediately felt on the entrance of the newcomers. They were fresh from the fashionable world, as was to be seen at once in their dress, in their equipment, and in everything about them; and they formed a contrast, not a little striking, with our friends, their rural style, and the vehement feelings actuating them in secret. This, however, very soon disappeared in the stream of past recollection and present interests; and a rapid, lively conversation soon united them all. After a short time, they again separated. The ladies withdrew to their own apartments, and there found amusement enough in the many things they had to

tell each other, and in setting to work, at the same time, to examine the new fashions, the spring dresses, bonnets, and such like; while the gentlemen busied themselves looking at the new travelling-chariots, trotting out the horses, and beginning at once to bargain and exchange.

They did not meet again till dinner: in the meantime they had changed their dress. And here, too, the newly arrived pair showed to all advantage. Everything they wore was new, and of a style such as their friends at the castle had never seen; and yet, being accustomed to it themselves, it appeared perfectly natural and graceful.

The conversation was brilliant and varied; as, indeed, in the presence of such persons, everything and nothing seems to be of interest. They spoke in French, that the attendants might not understand what they said, and swept, in happiest humour, over all that was passing in the great or the middle world. On one particular subject they remained, however, longer than was desirable. It was occasioned by Charlotte asking after one of her early friends, of whom she had to learn, with some distress, that she was on the point of being separated from her husband.

"It is a melancholy thing," Charlotte said, "when we fancy our absent friends are finally settled, when we believe persons very dear to us to be provided for for life, suddenly to hear that their fortunes are cast loose once more; that they have to strike into a fresh path of life, and very likely a most insecure one."

"Indeed, my dear friend," the count answered, "it is our own fault if we allow ourselves to be surprised at such things. We please ourselves with imagining matters of this earth, and particularly matrimonial connections, as very enduring: and, as concerns this last point, the plays which we see over and over again help to mislead us; being, as they are, so untrue to the course

of the world. In a comedy we see a marriage as the last aim of a desire which is hindered and crossed through a number of acts; and at the instant when it is reached the curtain falls, and the momentary satisfaction continues to ring on in our ears. But in the world it is very different. The play goes on still behind the scenes; and, when the curtain rises again, we may see and hear, perhaps, little enough of the marriage."

"It cannot be so very bad, however," said Charlotte, smiling. "We see people who have gone off the boards of the theatre, ready enough to undertake a part upon them again."

"There is nothing to be said against that," said the count. "In a new character a man may readily venture on a second trial; and, when we know the world, we see clearly that it is only this positive, eternal duration of marriage in a world where everything is in motion, which has anything unbecoming about it. A friend of mine, whose good humour shone forth principally in suggestions for new laws, maintained that every marriage should be concluded only for five years. Five, he said, was a sacred number, — pretty and uneven. Such a period would be long enough for people to learn one another's character, bring a child or two into the world, quarrel, separate, and, what was best, get reconciled again. He would often exclaim, 'How happily the first part of the time would pass away!' Two or three years, at least, would be perfect bliss. On one side or other, there would not fail to be a wish to have the relation continue longer; and the amiability would increase, the nearer they got to the time of parting. The indifferent, even the dissatisfied, party, would be softened and gained over by such behaviour: they would forget, as in pleasant company the hours pass always unobserved, how the time went by, and would be delightfully surprised when, after

the term had run out, they first observed that they had unknowingly prolonged it."

Charming and pleasant as all this sounded, and deep (Charlotte felt it to her soul) as was the moral significance which lay below it, expressions of this kind, on Ottilie's account, were most distasteful to her. She knew very well that nothing was more dangerous than the licentious conversation which treats culpable or semi-culpable actions as if they were common, ordinary, and even laudable; and of such undesirable kind assuredly was whatever touched on the sacredness of marriage. She therefore endeavoured, in her skilful way, to give the conversation another turn; and, when she found that she could not, it vexed her that Ottilie had managed everything so well that there was no occasion for her to leave the table. In her quiet, observant way, a nod or a look was enough for her to signify to the head servant whatever was to be done; and everything went off perfectly, although there were a couple of strange men in livery in the way, who were rather a trouble than a convenience. And so the count, without perceiving Charlotte's hints, went on giving his opinions on the same subject. It was not his wont to be tedious in conversation; but this was a thing which weighed so heavily on his heart, and the difficulties he found in getting separated from his wife were so great, that it had made him bitter against everything concerning the marriage bond, — that very bond which, nevertheless, he so anxiously desired for himself and the baroness.

"The same friend," he went on, "has another law to propose. A marriage is to be held indissoluble, only either when both parties, or at least one, enter into it for the third time. Such persons must be supposed to acknowledge beyond a doubt that they find marriage indispensable for themselves; they have had opportunities of thoroughly knowing themselves; of knowing

how they conducted themselves in their earlier unions; whether they have any peculiarities of temper, which are a more frequent cause of separation than bad dispositions. People would then observe one another more closely: they would pay as much attention to the married as to the unmarried, no one being able to tell how things may turn out."

"That would add no little to the interest of society," said Edward. "As things are now, when a man is married, nobody cares any more, either for his virtues or for his vices."

"Under this arrangement," the baroness rejoined, smiling, "our dear hosts have passed successfully two stages, and may make themselves ready for their third."

"Things have gone happily with them," said the count. "In their case, death has done with a good grace what in other cases the consistorial courts do with a very bad one."

"Let the dead rest," said Charlotte, with a half-serious look.

"Why so," replied the count, "when we can remember them with honour? They were generous enough to content themselves with less than their number of years for the sake of the larger good which they could leave behind them."

"Alas! that in such cases," said the baroness, with a suppressed sigh, "happiness is only bought with the sacrifice of our fairest years."

"Yes, indeed," answered the count; "and it might drive us to despair, if it were not the same with everything in this world. Nothing goes as we hope. Children do not fulfil what they promise; young people very seldom; and, if they do, the world does not."

Charlotte, who was delighted that the conversation had changed at last, replied cheerfully:

"Well, then, we must content ourselves with enjoying what good we are to have in fragments and pieces,

as we can get it; and the sooner we can accustom ourselves to this the better."

"Certainly," the count answered, "you two have had the enjoyment of very happy times. When I recall the years when you and Edward were the loveliest couple at the court, I see nothing now to be compared with those brilliant times and such magnificent figures. When you two used to dance together, all eyes were turned upon you, fastened upon you; while you saw nothing but each other."

"So much has changed since those days," said Charlotte, "that we can listen to such pretty things about ourselves without our modesty being shocked at them."

"I often privately found fault with Edward," said the count, "for not being more firm. Those singular parents of his would certainly have given way at last, and ten fair years is no trifle to gain."

"I must take Edward's part," struck in the baroness. "Charlotte was not altogether without fault, — not altogether free from what we must call prudential considerations: and although she had a real, hearty love for Edward, and did in her secret soul intend to marry him, I can bear witness how sorely she often tried him; and it was through this that he was at last unluckily prevailed upon to leave her and go abroad, and try to forget her."

Edward nodded to the baroness, and seemed grateful for her advocacy.

"And then I must add this," she continued, "in excuse for Charlotte. The man who was at that time wooing her had for a long time given proofs of his constant attachment to her, and, when one came to know him well, was a far more lovable person than the rest of you may like to acknowledge."

"Dear friend," the count replied, a little pointedly, "confess, now, that he was not altogether indifferent to yourself, and that Charlotte had more to fear from you

than from any other rival. I find it one of the highest traits in women, that they preserve so long their regard for a man, and that absence of no duration will serve to disturb or remove it."

"This fine feature men possess, perhaps, even more," answered the baroness. "At any rate, I have observed with you, my dear count, that no one has more influence over you than a lady to whom you were once attached. I have seen you take more trouble to do things when a certain person has asked you, than the friend of this moment would have obtained of you, if she had tried."

"Such a charge as that one must bear the best way one can," replied the count. "But, as to what concerns Charlotte's first husband, I could not endure him; because he parted so sweet a pair from one another, — a really predestined pair, who, once brought together, have no reason to fear the five years, or be thinking of a second or third marriage."

"We must try," Charlotte said, "to make up for what we then allowed to slip from us."

"Ay, and you must keep to that," said the count: "your first marriages," he continued, with some vehemence, "were exactly marriages of the true detestable sort. And, unhappily, marriages generally, even the best, have (forgive me for using a strong expression) something awkward about them. They destroy the delicacy of the relation: everything is made to rest on the broad certainty out of which one side or other, at least, is too apt to make their own advantage. It is all a matter of course; and they seem only to have got themselves tied together, that one or the other, or both, may go their own way the more easily."

At this moment, Charlotte, who was determined once for all that she would put an end to the conversation, made a bold effort at turning it, and succeeded. It then became more general. She and her husband and

the captain were able to take a part in it. Even Ottilie had to give her opinion, and the dessert was enjoyed in the happiest humour. It was particularly beautiful, being composed almost entirely of the rich summer fruits in elegant baskets, with epergnes of lovely summer flowers arranged in exquisite taste.

The new laying-out of the park came to be spoken of, and immediately after dinner they went to look at what was going on. Ottilie withdrew, under pretence of having household matters to look to; in reality, it was to set to work again at the transcribing. The count fell into conversation with the captain, and Charlotte afterward joined them. When they were at the summit, the captain good-naturedly ran back to fetch the plan; and, in his absence, the count said to Charlotte:

"He is an exceedingly pleasing person. He is very well informed, and his knowledge is always ready. His practical power, too, seems methodical and vigorous. What he is doing here would be of great importance in some higher sphere."

Charlotte listened to the captain's praises with an inward delight. She collected herself, however, and composedly and clearly confirmed what the count had said. But she was not a little startled when he continued:

"This acquaintance falls most opportunely for me. I know of a situation for which he is perfectly suited; and I shall be doing the greatest favour to a friend of mine, a man of high rank, by recommending to him a person who is so exactly everything which he desires."

Charlotte felt as if a stroke of thunder had fallen on her. The count did not observe it: women, being accustomed at all times to hold themselves in restraint, are always able, even in the most extraordinary cases to, maintain an apparent composure; but she heard not a

word more of what the count said, though he went on speaking.

"When I have made up my mind upon a thing," he added, "I am quick about it. I have put my letter together already in my head, and I shall write it immediately. You can find me some messenger, who can ride off with it this evening."

Charlotte was suffering agonies. Startled with the proposal, and shocked at herself, she was unable to utter a word. Happily the count continued talking of his plans for the captain, the desirableness of which was only too apparent to Charlotte.

It was time that the captain returned. He came up, and unrolled his design before the count. But with what changed eyes Charlotte now looked at the friend whom she was to lose! In her necessity she bowed, and turned away, and hurried down to the summer-house. Before she had gone half-way, the tears were streaming from her eyes; and she flung herself into the narrow room in the little hermitage, and gave herself up to an agony, a passion, a despair, of the possibility of which, but a few moments before, she had not had the slightest conception.

Edward had gone with the baroness in the other direction, toward the ponds. This ready-witted lady, who liked to be in the secret about everything, soon observed, in a few conversational feelers which she threw out, that Edward was very fluent and free-spoken in praise of Ottilie. She contrived in the most natural way to draw him out by degrees so completely, that at last she had not a doubt remaining that here was not merely an incipient fancy, but a veritable, full-grown passion.

Married women, if they have no particular love for one another, yet are silently in league together, especially against young girls. The consequences of such an inclination presented themselves only too quickly

to her world-experienced spirit. Added to this, she had been already, in the course of the day, talking to Charlotte about Ottilie: she had disapproved of her remaining in the country, particularly being a girl of so retiring a character; and she had proposed to take Ottilie with her to the residence of a friend, who was just then bestowing great expense on the education of an only daughter, and who was only looking about to find some well-disposed companion for her, to put her in the place of a second child, and let her share in every advantage. Charlotte had taken time to consider. But now this glimpse of the baroness into Edward's heart changed what had been but a suggestion at once into a settled determination; and the more rapidly she made up her mind about it, the more she outwardly seemed to flatter Edward's wishes. Never was there any one more self-possessed than this lady; and to have mastered ourselves in extraordinary cases disposes us to treat even a common case with dissimulation: it makes us inclined, as we have had to do so much violence to ourselves, to extend our control over others, and hold ourselves in a degree compensated in what we outwardly gain for what we inwardly have been obliged to sacrifice. To this feeling there is often joined a kind of secret, spiteful pleasure in the blind, unconscious ignorance with which the victim walks on into the snare. It is not immediate success we enjoy, but the thought of the surprise and exposure which is to follow. And thus was the baroness malicious enough to invite Edward to come with Charlotte, and pay her a visit at the grape-gathering, and, to his question whether they might bring Ottilie with them, to frame an answer which, if he pleased, he might interpret to his wishes.

Edward had already begun to pour out his delight at the beautiful scenery, the broad river, the hills, the rocks, the vineyard, the old castles, the water-parties,

and the jubilee at the grape-gathering, the wine-pressing, etc., — in all of which, in the innocence of his heart, he was only exuberating in the anticipation of the impression which these scenes were to make on the fresh spirits of Ottilie. At this moment they saw her approach: and the baroness said quickly to Edward that he had better say nothing to her of this intended autumn expedition, things which we set our hearts upon so long before so often failing to come to pass. Edward gave his promise: but he obliged his companion to move more quickly to meet her; and at last, when they came very close, he ran on several steps in advance. A heartfelt happiness was expressed in his whole being. He kissed her hand as he pressed into it a nosegay of wild-flowers, which he had gathered on his way.

The baroness felt bitter to her heart at the sight of it. At the same time that she was able to disapprove of what was really objectionable in this affection, she could not bear to see what was sweet and beautiful in it thrown away on such a poor, paltry girl.

When they had collected again at the supper-table, an entirely different temper was spread over the party. The count, who had in the meantime written his letter and despatched a messenger with it, occupied himself with the captain, whom he had been drawing out more and more, spending the whole evening at his side, talking of serious matters. The baroness, who sat on the count's right, found but small amusement in this; nor did Edward find any more. The latter, first because he was thirsty, and then because he was excited, did not spare the wine, and attached himself entirely to Ottilie, whom he had made sit by him. On the other side, next to the captain, sat Charlotte: for her it was hard, it was almost impossible, to conceal the emotion under which she was suffering.

The baroness had sufficient time to make her obser-

vations at leisure. She perceived Charlotte's uneasiness, and, occupied as she was with Edward's passion for Ottilie, easily satisfied herself that her abstraction and distress were owing to her husband's behaviour; and she set herself to consider in what way she could best compass her ends.

Supper was over, and the party remained divided. The count, whose object was to probe the captain to the bottom, had to try many turns before he could arrive at what he wished with so quiet, so little vain, but so exceedingly laconic, a person. They walked up and down together on one side of the saloon; while Edward, excited with wine and hope, was laughing with Ottilie at a window; and Charlotte and the baroness were walking backward and forward, without speaking, on the other side. Their being so silent, and their standing about in this uneasy, listless way, had its effect at last in breaking up the rest of the party. The ladies withdrew to their rooms, the gentlemen to the other wing of the castle; and so this day appeared to be concluded.

CHAPTER XI.

EDWARD went with the count to his room. They continued talking, and he was easily prevailed upon to stay a little longer time there. The count lost himself in old times, spoke eagerly of Charlotte's beauty, which, as a critic, he dwelt upon with much warmth.

"A pretty foot is a great gift of nature," he said. "It is a grace which never perishes. I observed it to-day, as she was walking. I should almost have liked to have kissed her shoe, and repeat that somewhat barbarous but significant practice of the Sarmatians, who know no better way of showing reverence for any one they love or respect, than by using his shoe to drink his health out of."

The point of the foot did not remain the only subject of praise between two old acquaintances: they went from the person back upon old stories and adventures, and came on the hinderances people at that time had thrown in the way of the lovers' meetings, — what trouble they had taken, what arts they had been obliged to devise, only to be able to tell each other that they loved.

"Do you remember," continued the count, "an adventure in which I most unselfishly stood your friend when their Highnesses were on a visit to your uncle, and were all together in that great, straggling castle? The day went in festivities and glitter of all sorts, and a part of the night at least in pleasant conversation."

"And you, in the meantime, had observed the back

way which led to the court ladies' quarter," said Edward, "and so managed to effect an interview for me with my beloved."

"And she," replied the count, "thinking more of propriety than of my enjoyment, had kept a frightful old duenna with her. So that, while you two, between looks and words, got on extremely well together, my lot, in the meanwhile, was far from pleasant."

"Only yesterday," answered Edward, "when you sent word you were coming, I was recalling the story to my wife, and describing our adventure on returning. We missed the road, and got into the entrance-hall from the garden. Knowing our way from thence so well as we did, we supposed we could get along easily enough. But you remember our surprise on opening the door. The floor was covered over with mattresses, on which the giants lay in rows stretched out and sleeping. The single sentinel at his post looked wonderingly at us; but we, in the cool way young men do things, strode quietly on over the outstretched boots, without disturbing a single one of the snoring children of Anak."

"I had the strongest inclination to stumble," the count said, "that there might be an alarm given. What a resurrection we should have witnessed."

At this moment the castle clock struck twelve.

"It is deep midnight," the count added, laughing, "and just the proper time: I must ask you, my dear baron, to show me a kindness. Do you guide me to-night, as I guided you then. I promised the baroness that I would see her before going to bed. We have had no opportunity of any private talk together the whole day. We have not seen each other for a long time, and it is only natural that we should wish for a confidential hour. If you will show me the way there, I will manage to get back

again; and, in any case, there will be no boots for me to stumble over."

"I shall be very glad to show you such a piece of hospitality," answered Edward, "only the three ladies are together in the same wing. Who knows whether we shall not find them still with one another, or make some other mistake, which may have a strange appearance?"

"Do not be afraid," said the count: "the baroness expects me. She is sure by this time to be in her own room, and alone."

"Well, then, the thing is easy enough," Edward answered. He took a candle, and lighted the count down a private staircase leading into a long gallery. At the end of this, he opened a small door. They mounted a winding flight of stairs, which brought them out upon a narrow landing-place; and then, putting the candle in the count's hand, he pointed to a tapestried door on the right, which opened readily at the first trial, and admitted the count, leaving Edward outside in the dark.

Another door on the left led into Charlotte's sleeping-room. He heard her voice, and listened. She was speaking to her maid. "Is Ottilie in bed?" she asked. "No," was the answer: "she is sitting writing in the room below." "You may light the night-lamp," said Charlotte: "I shall not want you any more. It is late. I can put out the candle, and do whatever I may want else myself."

It was a delight to Edward to hear that Ottilie was still writing. She is working for me, he thought triumphantly. Through the darkness, he fancied he could see her sitting all alone at her desk. He thought he would go to her, and see her; and how she would turn to receive him. He felt a longing, which he could not resist, to be near her once more. But, from where he was, there was no way to the apartments

which she occupied. He now found himself immediately at his wife's door. A singular change of feeling came over him. He tried the handle, but the door was bolted. He knocked gently. Charlotte did not hear him. She was walking rapidly up and down in the large dressing-room adjoining. She was repeating over and over what, since the count's unexpected proposal, she had often enough had to say to herself. The captain seemed to stand before her. At home and everywhere, he had become her all in all. And now he was to go, and it was all to be desolate again. She repeated whatever wise things one can say to one's self; she even anticipated, as people so often do, the wretched comfort, that time would come at last to her relief; and then she cursed the time which would have to pass before it could lighten her sufferings — she cursed the dead, cold time when they would be lightened. At last she burst into tears, which were the more welcome as she rarely wept. She flung herself on the sofa, and gave herself up unreservedly to her sufferings. Edward, meanwhile, could not take himself from the door. He knocked again, and a third time somewhat louder; so that Charlotte, in the stillness of the night, distinctly heard it, and started up in fright. Her first thought was, it can only be, it must be, the captain; her second, that it was impossible. She thought she must have been deceived. But surely she had heard it, and she wished and she feared to have heard it. She went into her sleeping-room, and walked lightly up to the bolted tapestry-door. She blamed herself for her fears. "Possibly it may be the baroness wanting something," she said to herself; and she called out quietly and calmly, "Is anybody there?" A light voice answered, "It is I." "Who?" returned Charlotte, not being able to make out the voice. She thought she saw the captain's figure standing at the door. In a slightly louder tone,

she heard the word "Edward." She drew back the bolt, and her husband stood before her. He greeted her with some light jest. She was unable to reply in the same tone. He complicated the mysterious visit by his mysterious explanation of it.

"Well, then," he said at last, "I will confess, the real reason why I am come is, that I have made a vow to kiss your shoe this evening."

"It is long since you thought of such a thing as that," said Charlotte.

"So much the worse," he answered, "and so much the better."

She sat down in an armchair to prevent him from seeing the scantiness of her dress. He flung himself down before her, and she could not prevent him from giving her shoe a kiss. And, when the shoe came off in his hand, he caught her foot, and pressed it tenderly against his breast.

Charlotte was one of those women who, being of a naturally calm temperament, continue in marriage, without any purpose or any effort, the air and character of lovers. She was never expressive toward her husband; generally, indeed, she rather shrank from any warm demonstration on his part. It was not that she was cold, or at all hard and repulsive; but she remained always like a loving bride, who draws back with a kind of shyness, even from what is permitted. And so Edward found her this evening, in a double sense. How greatly she longed that her husband would go: the figure of his friend seemed to hover in the air and reproach her. But what should have had the effect of driving Edward away only attracted him the more. There were visible traces of emotion about her. She had been crying; and tears, which with weak persons detract from their graces, add immeasurably to the attractiveness of those whom we know commonly as strong and self-possessed.

Edward was so agreeable, so gentle, so pressing: he begged to be allowed to stay with her. He did not demand it; but half in fun, half in earnest, he tried to persuade her: he never thought of his rights. At last, as if in mischief, he blew out the candle.

In the dim lamplight, the inward affection, the imagination, maintained their rights over the real: it was Ottilie that was resting in Edward's arms; and the captain, now faintly, now clearly, hovered before Charlotte's soul. And so, strangely intermingled, the absent and the present flowed in a sweet enchantment one into the other.

And yet the present would not let itself be robbed of its own unlovely right. They spent a part of the night talking and laughing at all sorts of things, the more freely, as the heart had no part in it. But when Edward awoke in the morning, on the bosom of his wife, the day seemed to stare in with a sad, awful look, and the sun to be shining in upon a crime. He stole lightly from her side; and she found herself, with strange enough feelings, when she awoke, alone.

CHAPTER XII.

When the party assembled again at breakfast, an attentive observer might have read in the behaviour of its various members the different things which were passing in their inner thoughts and feelings. The count and the baroness met with the air of happiness which a pair of lovers feel, who, after having been forced to endure a long separation, have mutually assured each other of their unaltered affection. On the other hand, Charlotte and Edward equally came into the presence of the captain and Ottilie with a sense of shame and remorse. For such is the nature of love that it believes in no rights except its own, and all other rights vanish away before it. Ottilie was in childlike spirits. For her, she was almost what might be called open. The captain appeared serious. His conversation with the count, which had roused in him feelings that for some time past had been at rest and dormant, had made him only too keenly conscious that here he was not fulfilling his work, and at bottom was but squandering himself in a half-activity of idleness.

Hardly had their guests departed, when fresh visitors were announced, — to Charlotte most welcomely, all she wished for being to be taken out of herself, and to have her attention dissipated. They annoyed Edward, who was longing to devote himself to Ottilie; and Ottilie did not wish for them either, the copy which had to be finished the next morning early being still incomplete. They stayed a long time, and immediately that they were gone she hurried off to her room.

It was now evening. Edward, Charlotte, and the captain had accompanied the strangers some little way on foot, before the latter got into their carriage; and, previous to returning home, they agreed to take a walk along the water-side.

A boat had come, which Edward had had fetched from a distance at no little expense; and they decided that they would try whether it was easy to manage. It was made fast on the bank of the middle pond, not far from some old ash-trees, on which they calculated to make an effect in their future improvements. There was to be a landing-place made there, and under the trees a seat was to be raised and architecturally adorned: it was to be the spot for which people were to make when they went across the water.

"And where had we better have the landing-place on the other side?" said Edward. "I should think, under my plane-trees."

"They stand a little too far to the right," said the captain. "You are nearer the castle if you land farther down. However, we must think about it."

The captain was already standing in the stern of the boat, and had taken up an oar. Charlotte got in, and Edward with her, — he took the other oar; but, as he was on the point of pushing off, he thought of Ottilie, — he recollected that joining in the sail would detain him too long; who could tell when he would get back? He made up his mind shortly and promptly, sprang back to the bank, and, reaching the other oar to the captain, hurried home, making excuses to himself as he ran.

Arriving there, he learned that Ottilie had shut herself up, — she was writing. In spite of the agreeable feeling that she was doing something for him, it was the keenest mortification to him not to be able to see her. His impatience increased every moment. He walked up and down the large drawing-room: he tried a

thousand things, and could not fix his attention upon any. He was longing to see her alone, before Charlotte came back with the captain. It was dark by this time, and the candles were lighted.

At last she came in, beaming with loveliness: the sense that she had done something for her friend had lifted all her being above itself. She put down the original and her transcript on the table before Edward.

"Shall we collate them?" she said, with a smile.

Edward did not know what to answer. He looked at her — he looked at the transcript. The first few sheets were written with the greatest carefulness in a delicate woman's hand; then the strokes appeared to alter, to become more light and free; but who can describe his surprise as he ran his eyes over the concluding page? "For Heaven's sake!" he cried, "what is this? this is my hand!" He looked at Ottilie, and again at the paper: the conclusion, especially, was exactly as if he had written it himself. Ottilie said nothing, but she looked at him with her eyes full of the warmest delight. Edward stretched out his arms. "You love me!" he cried: "Ottilie, you love me!" They fell on each other's breast: which had been the first to catch the other it would have been impossible to distinguish.

From that moment the world was all changed for Edward. He was no longer what he had been, and the world was no longer what it had been. They parted — he held her hands; they gazed in each other's eyes. They were on the point of embracing each other again.

Charlotte entered with the captain. Edward inwardly smiled at their excuses for having stayed out so long. "Oh! how far too soon you have returned," he said to himself.

They sat down to supper. They talked about the people who had been there that day. Edward, full of

love and ecstasy, spoke well of every one, — always sparing, often approving. Charlotte, who was not altogether of his opinion, remarked this temper in him, and jested with him about it, — he, who had always the sharpest thing to say on departed visitors, was this evening so gentle and tolerant.

With fervour and heartfelt conviction, Edward cried, "One has only to love a single creature with all one's heart, and the whole world at once looks lovely!"

Ottilie dropped her eyes on the ground, and Charlotte looked straight before her.

The captain took up the word, and said, "It is the same with deep feelings of respect and reverence: we first learn to recognise what there is that is to be valued in the world, when we find occasion to entertain such sentiments toward a particular object."

Charlotte made an excuse to retire early to her room, where she could give herself up to thinking over what had passed in the course of the evening between herself and the captain.

When Edward, jumping on shore, and, pushing off the boat, had himself committed his wife and his friend to the uncertain element, Charlotte found herself face to face with the man on whose account she had been already secretly suffering so bitterly, sitting in the twilight before her, and sweeping along the boat with the sculls in easy motion. She felt a depth of sadness, very rare with her, weighing on her spirits. The undulating movement of the boat, the splash of the oars, the faint breeze playing over the watery mirror, the sighing of the reeds, the long flight of the birds, the fitful twinkling of the first stars, — there was something spectral about it all in the universal stillness. She fancied her friend was bearing her away to set her on some far-off shore, and leave her there alone; strange emotions were passing through her, and she could not give way to them and weep.

The captain was describing to her the manner in which, according to his opinion, the improvements should be continued. He praised the construction of the boat: it was so convenient, he said, because one person could so easily manage it with a pair of oars. She should herself learn how to do this: there was often a delicious feeling in floating along alone upon the water, one's own ferryman and steersman.

The parting which was impending sank on Charlotte's heart as he was speaking. Is he saying this on purpose? she thought to herself. Does he know it yet? Does he suspect it? or is it only accident, and is he unconsciously foretelling me my fate?

A weary, impatient heaviness took hold of her: she begged him to make for land as soon as possible, and return with her to the castle.

It was the first time the captain had sailed on the ponds; and although he had, upon the whole, ascertained their depth, he did not know accurately the particular spots. Dusk was coming on: he directed his course to a place where he thought it would be easy to get on shore, and from which he knew the foot-path which led to the castle was not far distant. Charlotte, however, repeated her wish to get to land quickly; and the place which he thought of being at a short distance, he gave it up, and, exerting himself as much as he possibly could, made straight for the bank. Unhappily the water was shallow, and he ran aground some way off from it. Owing to the rate at which he was going, the boat got stuck; and all his efforts to move it were in vain. What was to be done? There was no alternative but to get into the water and carry his companion ashore.

It was done without difficulty or danger. He was strong enough not to totter with her, or give her any cause for anxiety; but in her agitation she had thrown her arms about his neck. He held her fast, and

pressed her to himself, and at last laid her down upon a grassy bank, not without emotion and confusion . . . she was still lying on his neck . . . he once more locked her in his arms, and pressed a warm kiss upon her lips. The next moment he was at her feet: he took her hand, and held it to his mouth, and cried:

"Charlotte, will you forgive me?"

The kiss which he had ventured to give, and which she had all but returned to him, brought Charlotte to herself again: she pressed his hand, but she did not attempt to raise him up. She bent down over him, and laid her hand upon his shoulder, and said:

"We cannot now prevent this moment from forming an epoch in our lives, but it depends on us to bear ourselves in a manner which shall be worthy of us. You must go away, my dear friend; and you are going. The count has plans for you, to give you better prospects: I am glad, and I am sorry. I did not mean to speak of it till it was certain, but this moment obliges me to tell you my secret. . . . Since it does not depend on ourselves to alter our feelings, I can only forgive you, I can only forgive myself, if we have the courage to alter our situation." She raised him up, took his arm to support herself, and they walked back to the castle without speaking.

But now she was standing in her own room, where she could not but feel and know that she was Edward's wife. Her strength, and the various discipline in which through life she had trained herself, came to her assistance in the conflict. Accustomed as she had always been to look steadily into herself and to control herself, she did not now find it difficult, with an earnest effort, to come to the resolution which she desired. She could almost smile when she remembered the strange visit of the night before. Suddenly she was seized with a wonderful instinctive feeling, a thrill of fearful delight which changed into holy hope and long-

ing. She knelt earnestly down, and repeated the oath which she had taken to Edward before the altar.

Friendship, affection, renunciation, floated in glad, happy images before her. She felt restored to health and to herself. A sweet weariness came over her, and she calmly fell asleep.

CHAPTER XIII.

EDWARD, on his part, was in a very different temper. So little he thought of sleeping, that it did not once occur to him even to undress himself. A thousand times he kissed the transcript of the document; but it was the beginning of it, in Ottilie's childish, timid hand: the end he scarcely dared to kiss, for he thought it was his own hand which he saw. Oh, that it were another document! he whispered to himself; and, as it was, he felt it was the sweetest assurance that his highest wish would be fulfilled. Thus it remained in his hands, thus he continued to press it to his heart, although disfigured by a third name subscribed to it. The waning moon rose up over the wood. The warmth of the night drew Edward out into the free air. He wandered this way and that way: he was at once the most restless and the happiest of mortals. He strayed through the gardens — they seemed too narrow for him; he hurried out into the park, and it was too wide. He was drawn back toward the castle: he stood under Ottilie's window. He threw himself down on the steps of the terrace below. "Walls and bolts," he said to himself, "may still divide us, but our hearts are not divided. If she were here before me, into my arms she would fall, and I into hers; and what can one desire but that sweet certainty!" All was stillness round him; not a breath was moving; so still it was, that he could hear the unresting creatures underground at their work, to whom day or night are alike. He abandoned himself to his delicious dreams: at last

he fell asleep, and did not wake till the sun with his royal beams was mounting up in the sky and scattering the early mists.

He found that he was the first person awake on his domain. The labourers seemed to be staying away too long; they came; he thought they were too few, and the work set out for the day too slight for his desires. He inquired for more workmen: they were promised, and in the course of the day they came. But these, too, were not enough for him to carry his plans out as rapidly as he wished. To do the work gave him no pleasure any longer: it should all be done. And for whom? The paths should be gravelled, that Ottilie might walk pleasantly upon them; seats should be made at every spot and corner, that Ottilie might rest on them. The new building, too, was hurried forward. It should be finished for Ottilie's birthday. In all he thought and all he did, there was no more moderation. The sense of loving and of being loved urged him out into the unlimited. How changed was now to him the look of all the rooms, their furniture and their decorations! He did not feel as if he was in his own house any more. Ottilie's presence absorbed everything. He was utterly lost in her: no other thought ever rose before him, no conscience disturbed him, every restraint which had been laid upon his nature burst loose. His whole being centred upon Ottilie. This impetuosity of passion did not escape the captain, who longed to prevent, if he could, its evil consequences. All those plans which were now being hurried on with this immoderate speed had been drawn out and calculated for a long, quiet, easy execution. The sale of the farm had been completed, the first instalment had been paid. Charlotte, according to the arrangement, had taken possession of it. But the very first week after, she found it more than usually necessary to exercise patience and resolution, and to

keep her eye on what was being done. In the present hasty style of proceeding, the money which had been set apart for the purpose would not go far.

Much had been begun, and much yet remained to be done. How could the captain leave Charlotte in such a situation? They consulted together, and agreed that it would be better that they themselves should hurry on the works, and for this purpose employ money which could be made good again at the period fixed for the discharge of the second instalment of what was to be paid for the farm. It could be done almost without loss. They would have a freer hand. Everything would progress simultaneously. There were labourers enough at hand; and they could get more accomplished at once, and arrive swiftly and surely at their aim. Edward gladly gave his consent to a plan which so entirely coincided with his own views.

During this time Charlotte persisted with all her heart in what she had determined for herself, and her friend stood by her with a like purpose manfully. This very circumstance, however, produced a greater intimacy between them. They spoke openly to one another of Edward's passion, and consulted what had better be done. Charlotte kept Ottilie more about herself, watching her narrowly; and, the more she understood her own heart, the deeper she was able to penetrate into the heart of the poor girl. She saw no help for it, except in sending her away.

It now appeared a happy thing to her that Luciana had gained such high honours at the school; for her great aunt, as soon as she heard of it, desired to take her entirely to herself, to keep her with her, and bring her out into the world. Ottilie could, therefore, return thither. The captain would leave them well provided for, and everything would be as it had been a few months before; indeed, in many respects better. Charlotte thought she could soon recover her own place in

Edward's affection; and she settled it all, and laid it all out before herself so sensibly, that she only strengthened herself more completely in her delusion — as if it were possible for them to return within their old limits, — as if a bond which had been violently broken could again be joined together as before.

In the meantime, Edward felt very deeply the hindrances which were thrown in his way. He soon observed that they were keeping him and Ottilie separate; that they made it difficult for him to speak with her alone, or even to approach her, except in the presence of others. And, while he was angry about this, he was angry at many things besides. If he caught an opportunity for a few hasty words with Ottilie, it was not only to assure her of his love, but to complain of his wife and of the captain. He never felt, that, with his own irrational haste, he was on the way to exhaust the cash-box. He bitterly complained, that, in the execution of the work, they were not keeping to the first agreement: and yet he had been himself a consenting party to the second; indeed, it was he who had occasioned it and made it necessary.

Hatred is a partisan, but love is even more so. Ottilie also estranged herself from Charlotte and the captain. As Edward was complaining one day to Ottilie of the latter, saying that he was not treating him like a friend, or, under the circumstances, acting quite uprightly, she answered unthinkingly, "I have once or twice had a painful feeling that he was not quite honest with you. I heard him say once to Charlotte, 'If Edward would but spare us that eternal flute of his! He can make nothing of it, and it is too disagreeable to listen to him.' You may imagine how it hurt me, when I like accompanying you so much."

She had scarcely uttered the words when her conscience whispered to her that she had much better

have been silent. However, the thing was said. Edward's features worked violently. Never had anything stung him more. He was touched on his tenderest point. It was his amusement: he followed it like a child. He never made the slightest pretensions: what gave him pleasure should be treated with forbearance by his friends. He never thought how intolerable it is for a third person to have his ears offended by insufficient skill. He was indignant: he was hurt in a way which he could not forgive. He felt himself discharged from all obligations.

The necessity of being with Ottilie, of seeing her, whispering to her, exchanging his confidence with her, increased with every day. He determined to write to her, and ask her to carry on a secret correspondence with him. The strip of paper on which he had, laconically enough, made his request, lay on his writing-table, and was swept off by a draught of wind as his valet entered to dress his hair. The latter was in the habit of picking up bits of paper which might be lying about, to try the heat of the iron. This time he got hold of the little note, and he twisted it up hastily: it was singed. Edward, observing the mistake, snatched it out of his hand. After the man was gone, he sat down to write it over again. The second time it would not run so readily off his pen. It gave him a little uneasiness: he hesitated, but he got over it. He squeezed the paper into Ottilie's hand the first moment he was able to approach her. Ottilie answered him immediately. He put the note unread in his waistcoat pocket, which, being made short in the fashion of the time, was shallow, and did not hold it as it ought. It worked out, and fell without his observing it on the ground. Charlotte saw it, picked it up, and, after giving a hasty glance at it, reached it to him.

"Here is something in your handwriting," she said, "which you may be sorry to lose."

He was perplexed. Is she dissembling? he thought. Does she know what is in the note, or is she deceived by the resemblance of the hand? He hoped, he believed, the latter. He was warned — doubly warned; but those strange accidents, through which a higher intelligence seems to be speaking to us, his passion was not able to interpret. Rather, as he went farther and farther on, he felt the restraint under which his friend and his wife seemed to be holding him the more intolerable. His pleasure in their society was gone. His heart was closed against them; and, though he was obliged to endure their society, he could not succeed in rediscovering or in reanimating within his heart anything of his old affection for them. The silent reproaches which he was forced to make to himself about it were disagreeable to him. He tried to help himself with a kind of humour, which, however, being without love, was also without its usual grace.

Over all such trials, Charlotte found assistance to rise in her own inward feelings. She knew her own determination. Her own affection, fair and noble as it was, she would utterly renounce.

And sorely she longed to go to the assistance of the other two. Separation, she knew well, would not alone suffice to heal so deep a wound. She resolved that she would speak openly about it to Ottilie herself. But she could not do it. The recollection of her own weakness stood in her way. She thought she could talk generally to her about the sort of thing. But general expressions about "the sort of thing" fitted her own case equally well, and she could not bear to touch it. Whatever hint she would give Ottilie recoiled back on her own heart. She would warn, and she was obliged to feel that she might herself still be in need of warning.

She contented herself, therefore, with silently keeping the lovers more apart, and by this gained nothing.

The slight hints which frequently escaped her had no effect upon Ottilie; for Ottilie had been assured by Edward that Charlotte was devoted to the captain, that Charlotte herself wished for a separation, and that he was at this moment considering the readiest means by which it could be brought about.

Ottilie, led by the sense of her own innocence along the road to the happiness for which she longed, only lived for Edward. Strengthened by her love for him in all good, more light and happy in her work for his sake, and more frank and open toward others, she found herself in a heaven upon earth.

So, all together, each in his or her own fashion, reflecting or unreflecting, they continued the routine of their lives. All seemed to go its ordinary way; as, in monstrous cases, when everything is at stake, men will still live on, as if it were all nothing.

CHAPTER XIV.

In the meantime a letter came from the count to the captain, — two indeed, — one which he might produce, holding out fair, excellent prospects in the distance; the other containing a distinct offer of an immediate situation, a place of high importance and responsibility at the court, his rank as major, a very considerable salary, and other advantages. A number of circumstances, however, made it desirable, that, for the moment, he should not speak of it; and consequently he only informed his friends of his remote expectations, concealing what was so close at hand.

He went warmly on, at the same time, with his present occupation, and quietly made arrangements to secure the works being all continued without interruption after his departure. He was now himself desirous that as much as possible should be finished off at once, and was ready to hasten things forward to prepare for Ottilie's birthday. And so, though without having to come to any express understanding, the two friends worked side by side together. Edward was now well pleased that the cash-box was filled by their having taken up money. The whole affair went froward at fullest speed.

The captain had done his best to oppose the plan to throwing the three ponds together into a single sheet of water. The lower embankment would have to be made much stronger, the two intermediate embankments to be taken away; and altogether, in more than

one sense, it seemed a very questionable proceeding. However, both these schemes had been already undertaken; the soil which was removed above, being carried at once down to where it was wanted. And here there came opportunely on the scene a young architect, an old pupil of the captain, who, partly by introducing workmen who understood work of this nature, and partly by himself, whenever it was possible, contracting for the work itself, advanced things not a little; while, at the same time, they could feel more confidence in their being securely and lastingly executed. In secret, this was a great pleasure to the captain. He could now be confident that his absence would not be so severely felt. It was one of the points on which he was most resolute with himself, never to leave anything which he had taken in hand uncompleted, unless he could see his place satisfactorily supplied. And he could not but hold in small respect persons who introduce confusion around themselves only to make their absence felt, and are ready to disturb, in wanton selfishness, what they will not be at hand to restore.

So they laboured on, straining every nerve to make Ottilie's birthday splendid, without any open acknowledgment that this was what they were aiming at, or, indeed, without their directly acknowledging it to themselves. Charlotte, wholly free from jealousy as she was, could not think it right to keep it as a real festival. Ottilie's youth, the circumstances of her fortune, and her relationship to their family, were not at all such as made it fit that she should appear as the queen of the day; and Edward would not have it talked about, because everything was to spring out, as it were, of itself, with a natural and delightful surprise.

They therefore came, all of them, to a sort of tacit understanding, that on this day, without further circumstance, the new house in the park was to be

opened, and they might take the occasion to invite the neighbourhood, and give a holiday to their own people. Edward's passion, however, knew no bounds. Longing as he did to give himself to Ottilie, his presents and promises there were no limits to. The birthday gifts which on the great occasion he was to offer her seemed, as Charlotte had arranged them, far too insignificant. He spoke to his valet, who had the care of his wardrobe, and who, consequently, had extensive acquaintance among the tailors and mercers and fashionable milliners; and he, who not only understood himself what valuable presents were, but also the most graceful way in which they should be offered, immediately ordered an elegant box, covered with red morocco, and studded with steel nails, to be filled with presents worthy of such a shell. Another thing, too, he suggested to Edward. Among the stores at the castle was a small stock of fireworks which had never been let off. It would be easy to get some more, and have something really fine. Edward caught the idea, and his servant promised to see to its being executed. This matter was to remain a secret.

While this was going on, the captain, as the day drew nearer, had been making arrangements for a body of police to be present, — a precaution which he always thought desirable when large numbers of men are to be brought together. And, indeed, against beggars, and against all other inconveniences by which the pleasure of a festival might be disturbed, he had made effectual provision.

Edward and his confidant, on the contrary, were mainly occupied with their fireworks. They were to be let off on the side of the middle water in front of the great ash-tree. The party were to take up their station on the opposite side, under the planes, that at a sufficient distance from the scene, in ease and safety, they might see them to the best effect, with the reflec-

tions on the water, the water-rockets, and floating-lights, and all the other designs.

Under some other pretext, Edward had the ground underneath the plane-trees cleared of bushes and grass and moss. And now first could be seen the beauty of their forms, together with their full height and spread right up from the earth. He was delighted with them. It was just this very time of the year that he had planted them. "How long ago could it have been?" he said to himself. As soon as he got home, he turned over the old diary-books, which his father, especially when in the country, was very careful in keeping. He might not find an entry of this particular planting; but another important domestic matter, which Edward well remembered, and which had occurred on the same day, would surely be mentioned. He turned over a few volumes. The circumstance he was looking for was there. How amazed, how overjoyed he was, when he discovered the strangest coincidence! The day and the year on which he had planted those trees, was the very day, the very year, when Ottilie was born.

CHAPTER XV.

THE long-wished-for morning dawned at last on Edward, and very soon a number of guests arrived. They had sent out a large number of invitations; and many who had missed the laying of the foundation-stone, which was reported to have been so charming, were the more careful not to be absent on the second festivity.

Before dinner the carpenter's people appeared, with music, in the court of the castle. They bore an immense garland of flowers, composed of a number of single wreaths, winding in and out, one above the other; saluting the company, they made request, according to custom, for silk handkerchiefs and ribbons, at the hands of the fair sex, with which to dress themselves out. While dinner was going on in the castle, they marched off, singing and shouting; and, after amusing themselves awhile in the village, and coaxing many a ribbon out of the women there, old and young, they came at last, with crowds behind them, and crowds expecting them, out upon the height where the park-house was now standing. After dinner, Charlotte rather held back her guests. She did not wish that there should be any solemn or formal procession; and they found their way in little parties, broken up as they pleased, without rule or order, to the scene of action. Charlotte stayed behind with Ottilie, and did not improve matters by doing so. For Ottilie being really the last that appeared, it seemed as if the trumpets and the clarionets had only been waiting for her,

and as if the gaieties had been ordered to commence directly on her arrival.

To remove the rough exterior from the house, it had been hung with green boughs and flowers. They had dressed it out in an architectural fashion, according to a design of the captain's: only that, without his knowledge, Edward had desired the architect to work in the date upon the cornice in flowers; and this was necessarily permitted to remain. The captain had only arrived on the scene in time to prevent Ottilie's name from figuring in splendour on the gable. The beginning, which had been made for this, he contrived to turn skilfully to some other use, and to get rid of such of the letters as had been already finished.

The wreath was set up, and was to be seen far and wide about the country. The flags and the ribbons fluttered gaily in the air; and a short oration was, the greater part of it, dispersed by the wind. The solemnity was at an end. There was now to be a dance on the smooth lawn in front of the building, which had been enclosed with boughs and branches. A handsome journeyman carpenter led up to Edward a bright girl of the village, and called himself upon Ottilie, who stood out with him. These two couples speedily found others to follow them; and Edward contrived pretty soon to change partners, catching Ottilie, and making the round with her. The younger part of the company joined merrily in the dance with the people, while the elder among them stood and looked on.

Then, before they broke up and walked about, an order was given that they should all collect again at sunset under the plane-trees. Edward was the first upon the spot, ordering everything, and making his arrangements with his valet, who was to be on the other side, in company with the firework-maker, managing his exhibition of the spectacle.

The captain was far from satisfied at some of the preparations which he saw made, and he endeavoured to get a word with Edward about the crush of spectators which was to be expected. But the latter, somewhat hastily, begged that he might be allowed to manage this part of the day's amusements himself.

The upper end of the embankment, having been recently raised, was still far from compact. It had been staked; but there was no grass upon it, and the earth was uneven and insecure. The crowd pressed on, however, in great numbers. The sun went down; and the company was served with refreshments under the plane-trees, to pass the time till it should have become sufficiently dark. The place was approved of beyond measure; and they looked forward to frequently enjoying the view, over so lovely a sheet of water, on future occasions.

A calm evening — a perfect calm — promised everything in favour of the spectacle, when suddenly loud and violent shrieks were heard. Large masses of the earth had given way on the edge of the embankment, and a number of people were precipitated into the water. The pressure from the throng had gone on increasing till at last it had become more than the newly laid soil would bear, and the bank had fallen in. Everybody wanted to obtain the best place, and now there was no getting either backwards or forwards.

People ran this and that way, more to see what was going on than to render assistance. What could be done when no one could reach the place?

The captain, with a few determined persons, hurried down and drove the crowd off the embankment back upon the shore, in order that those who were really of service might have free room to move. One way or another they contrived to seize hold of such as were sinking; and, with or without assistance, all who had been in the water were got out safe upon the bank,

with the exception of one boy, whose struggles in his fright, instead of bringing him nearer to the embankment, had only carried him farther from it. His strength seemed to be failing — now only a hand was seen above the surface, and now a foot. By an unlucky chance the boat was on the opposite shore filled with fireworks: it was a long business to unload it, and help was slow in coming. The captain's resolution was taken: he flung off his coat; all eyes were directed toward him, and his sturdy, vigorous figure gave every one hope and confidence; but a cry of surprise rose out of the crowd as they saw him fling himself into the water: every eye watched him as the strong swimmer swiftly reached the boy, and bore him, although to appearance dead, to the embankment.

Now the boat came up. The captain stepped in, and inquired of those who were present whether all had been saved. The surgeon was speedily on the spot, and took charge of the inanimate boy. Charlotte joined them, and entreated the captain to go now and take care of himself, to hurry back to the castle and change his clothes. He would not go, however, till persons on whose sense he could rely, who had been close to the spot at the time of the accident, and who had assisted in saving those who had fallen in, assured him that all were safe.

Charlotte saw him on his way to the house; and then she remembered that the wine and the tea, and everything else which he could want, had been locked up, for fear any of the servants should take advantage of the disorder of the holiday, as on such occasions they are too apt to do. She hurried through the scattered groups of her company, which were loitering about the plane-trees. Edward was there, talking to every one — beseeching every one to stay. He would give the signal directly, and the fireworks should begin. Charlotte went up to him, and entreated

him to put off an amusement which was no longer in place, and which at the present moment no one could enjoy. She reminded him of what ought to be done for the boy who had been saved, and for his preserver.

"The surgeon will do whatever is right, no doubt," replied Edward. "He is provided with everything which he can want, and we should only be in the way if we crowded about him with our anxieties."

Charlotte persisted in her opinion, and made a sign to Ottilie, who at once prepared to retire with her. Edward seized her hand, and cried, "We will not end this day in a lazaretto. She is too good for a sister of mercy. Without us, I should think, the half-dead may wake, and the living dry themselves."

Charlotte did not answer, but went. Some followed her; others followed these; in the end, no one wished to be the last, and all followed. Edward and Ottilie found themselves alone under the plane-trees. He most urgently insisted on staying, notwithstanding the anxiety with which she entreated him to go back with her to the castle. "No, Ottilie!" he cried: "the extraordinary is not brought to pass in the smooth, common way, — the wonderful accident of this evening brings us more speedily together. You are mine, — I have often said it to you, and sworn it to you. We will not say it and swear it any more — we will make it BE."

The boat came over from the other side. The valet was in it: he asked, with some embarrassment, what his master wished to have done with the fireworks.

"Let them off!" Edward cried to him, "let them off! It was only for you that they were provided, Ottilie; and you shall be the only one to see them. Let me sit beside you, and enjoy them with you." Tenderly, timidly, he sat down at her side, without touching her.

Rockets went hissing up, cannon thundered, Roman

candles shot out their blazing balls, squibs flashed and darted, wheels spun round, first singly, then in pairs, then all at once, faster and faster, one after the other, and more and more together. Edward, whose bosom was on fire, watched the blazing spectacle with eyes gleaming with delight; but Ottilie, with her delicate and nervous feelings, in all this noise and fitful blazing and flashing found more to distress her than to please. She leaned shrinking against Edward; and he, as she drew to him and clung to him, felt the delightful sense that she belonged entirely to him.

The night had scarcely reassumed its rights, when the moon rose, and lighted their path as they walked back. A figure, with his hat in his hand, stepped across their way, and begged an alms of them: in the general holiday he said that he had been forgotten. The moon shone upon his face, and Edward recognised the features of the importunate beggar; but, happy as he then was, it was impossible for him to be angry with any one. He could not recollect, that, especially for that particular day, begging had been forbidden under the heaviest penalties: he thrust his hand into his pocket, took the first coin which he found, and gave the fellow a piece of gold. His own happiness was so unbounded that he would have liked to have shared it with every one.

In the meantime all had gone well at the castle. The skill of the surgeon, everything which was required being ready at hand, Charlotte's assistance, — all had worked together, and the boy was brought to life again. The guests dispersed, wishing to catch a glimpse or two of what was to be seen of the fireworks from the distance; and, after a scene of such confusion, were glad to get back to their own quiet homes.

The captain also, after having rapidly changed his dress, had taken an active part in what required to be done. It was now all quiet again, and he found him-

self alone with Charlotte. Gently and affectionately he now told her that his time for leaving them approached. She had gone through so much that evening that this discovery made but a slight impression upon her: she had seen how her friend could sacrifice himself; how he had saved another, and had himself been saved. These strange incidents seemed to foretell an important future to her, but not an unhappy one.

Edward, who now entered with Ottilie, was likewise informed of the captain's impending departure. He suspected that Charlotte had known longer how near it was; but he was far too much occupied with himself, and with his own plans, to take it amiss, or care about it.

On the contrary, he listened attentively, and with signs of pleasure, to the account of the excellent and honourable position in which the captain was to be placed. The course of the future was hurried impetuously forward by his own secret wishes. Already he saw the captain married to Charlotte, and himself married to Ottilie. It would have been the richest present which any one could have made him, on the occasion of the day's festival.

But how surprised was Ottilie, when, on going to her room, she found upon the table the beautiful box! Instantly she opened it; inside, all the things were so nicely packed and arranged, that she did not venture to take them out, she scarcely even ventured to lift them. There were muslin, cambric, silk, shawls, and lace, all rivalling each other in delicacy, beauty, and costliness: nor were ornaments forgotten. The intention had been, as she saw well, to supply her with more than one complete suit of clothes; but it was all so costly, so little like what she had been accustomed to, that she scarcely dared, even in thought, to believe it could be really for her.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE next morning the captain had disappeared, having left a grateful, feeling letter, addressed to his friends, upon his table. He and Charlotte had already taken a half-leave of each other the evening before. She felt that the parting was for ever, and she resigned herself to it; for in the count's second letter, which the captain had at last shown to her, there was a hint of a prospect of an advantageous marriage; and, although he had paid no attention to it at all, she accepted it for as good as certain, and gave him up firmly and fully.

Now, therefore, she thought that she had a right to require of others the same control over themselves which she had exercised herself: it had not been impossible to her, and it ought not to be impossible to them. With this feeling, she began the conversation with her husband; and she entered upon it the more openly and easily, from a sense that the question must now, once for all, be decisively set at rest.

"Our friend has left us," she said: "we are now once more together as we were, and it depends upon ourselves whether we choose to return altogether into our old position."

Edward, who heard nothing except what flattered his own passion, believed that Charlotte, in these words, was alluding to her previous widowed state, and, in a roundabout way, was making a suggestion for a separation; so that he answered, with a laugh, "Why not? all we want is, to come to an understanding." But he

found himself sorely enough undeceived, as Charlotte continued, "And we have now a choice of opportunities for placing Ottilie in another situation. Two openings have offered themselves for her, either of which will do very well. Either she can return to the school, as my daughter has left it, and is with her great-aunt; or she can be received into a desirable family, where, as the companion of an only child, she will enjoy all the advantages of a solid education."

Edward, with a tolerably successful effort at commanding himself, replied, "Ottilie has been so much spoiled, by living so long with us here, that she will scarcely like to leave us now."

"We have all of us been too much spoiled," said Charlotte, "and yourself not least. This is an epoch which requires us seriously to bethink ourselves. It is a solemn warning to us to consider what is really for the good of all the members of our little circle, and we ourselves must not be afraid of making sacrifices."

"At any rate, I cannot see that it is right that Ottilie should be sacrificed," replied Edward; "and that would be the case if we were now to allow her to be sent away among strangers. The captain's good genius has sought him out here; we can feel easy, we can feel happy, at seeing him leave us: but who can tell what may be before Ottilie? There is no occasion for haste."

"What is before us is sufficiently clear," Charlotte answered with some emotion; and, as she was determined to have it all out at once, she went on, "You love Ottilie: every day you are becoming more attached to her. A reciprocal feeling is rising on her side as well, and feeding itself in the same way. Why should we not acknowledge in words what every hour makes obvious? And are we not to have the common prudence to ask ourselves in what it is to end?"

"We may not be able to find an answer on the

moment," replied Edward, collecting himself; "but so much may be said, that, if we cannot exactly tell what will come of it, we may resign ourselves to wait and see what the future may tell us about it."

"No great wisdom is required to prophesy here," answered Charlotte; "and, at any rate, we ought to feel that you and I are past the age when people may walk blindly where they should not or ought not to go. There is no one else to take care of us: we must be our own friends, our own managers. No one expects us to commit ourselves in an outrage upon decency; no one expects that we are going to expose ourselves to censure or to ridicule."

"How can you so mistake me?" said Edward, unable to reply to his wife's clear, open words. "Can you find it a fault in me, if I am anxious about Ottilie's happiness? I do not mean future happiness, — no one can count on that, — but what is present, palpable, and immediate. Consider — don't deceive yourself — consider frankly Ottilie's case, torn away from us, and sent to live among strangers. I, at least, am not cruel enough to propose such a change for her."

Charlotte saw too clearly into her husband's intentions through this disguise. For the first time she felt how far he had estranged himself from her. Her voice shook a little. "Will Ottilie be happy if she divides us?" she said. "If she deprives me of a husband, and his children of a father?"

"Our children, I should have thought, were sufficiently provided for," said Edward with a cold smile, adding rather more kindly, "but why at once expect the very worst?"

"The very worst is too sure to follow this passion of yours," returned Charlotte. "Do not refuse good advice while there is yet time; do not throw away the means which I propose to save us. In troubled cases those must work and help who see the clearest:

this time it is I. Dear, dearest Edward! listen to me! Can you propose to me that now at once I shall renounce my happiness, renounce my fairest rights, renounce you?"

"Who says that?" replied Edward with some embarrassment.

"You yourself," answered Charlotte: "in determining to keep Ottilie here, are you not acknowledging everything which must arise out of it? I will urge nothing on you; but, if you cannot conquer yourself, at least you will not be able much longer to deceive yourself."

Edward felt how right she was. It is fearful to hear spoken out in words what the heart has gone on long permitting to itself in secret. To escape only for a moment, Edward answered, "It is not yet clear to me what you want."

"My intention," she replied, "was to talk over with you these two proposals: each of them has its advantages. The school would be best suited to her, as she now is; but the other situation is larger and wider, and promises more, when I think what she may become." She then detailed to her husband circumstantially what would lie before Ottilie in each position, and concluded with the words, "For my own part, I should prefer the lady's house to the school, for more reasons than one, but particularly because I should not like the affection, the love indeed, of the young man there which Ottilie has gained, to increase."

Edward appeared to assent, but only in order to find some means of delay. Charlotte, who desired to commit him to a definite step, seized the opportunity, as Edward made no immediate opposition, to settle Ottilie's departure, for which she had already privately made all preparations, for the next day.

Edward shuddered: he thought he was betrayed. His wife's affectionate speech he fancied was an art-

fully contrived trick to separate him for ever from his happiness. He appeared to leave the thing entirely to her, but in his heart his resolution was already taken. To gain time to breathe, to put off the immediate, intolerable misery of Ottilie's being sent away, he determined to leave his house. He told Charlotte he was going; but he had blinded her to his real reason by telling her that he would not be present at Ottilie's departure, indeed, that from that moment he would see her no more. Charlotte, who believed that she had gained her point, approved most cordially. He ordered his horse, gave his valet the necessary directions what to pack up, and where he should follow him; and then, on the point of departure, he sat down and wrote:

"EDWARD TO CHARLOTTE.

"The misfortune, my love, which has befallen us may or may not admit of remedy; only this I feel, that, if I am not at once to be driven to despair, I must find some means of delay for myself and for all of us. In making myself the sacrifice, I have a right to make a request. I am leaving my home, and I only return to it under happier and more peaceful auspices. While I am away, you keep possession of it — *but with Ottilie.* I choose to know that she is with you, and not among strangers. Take care of her: treat her as you have treated her, only more lovingly, more kindly, more tenderly! I promise that I will not attempt any secret intercourse with her. Leave me, as long a time as you please, without knowing anything about you. I will not allow myself to be anxious, nor need you be uneasy about me; only, with all my heart and soul, I beseech you, make no attempt to send Ottilie away, or to introduce her into any other situation. Beyond the circle of the castle and the park, placed in the hands of strangers, she belongs to me; and I will take posses-

sion of her! If you have any regard for my affection, for my wishes, for my sufferings, you will leave me alone to my madness; and, if any hope of recovery from it should ever hereafter offer itself to me, I will not resist."

This last sentence had proceeded from his pen, not from his heart. Even when he saw it upon the paper, he began bitterly to weep. That he, under any circumstances, should renounce the happiness — even the wretchedness — of loving Ottilie! He only now began to feel what he was doing: he was going away without knowing what was to be the result. At any rate, he was not to see her again *now:* with what certainty could he promise himself that he would ever see her again? But the letter was written, the horses were at the door: every moment he was afraid he might see Ottilie somewhere, and then his whole purpose would go to the winds. He collected himself: he remembered, that, at any rate, he would be able to return at any moment he pleased, and that by his absence he would have advanced nearer to his wishes; on the other side, he pictured Ottilie to himself forced to leave the house if he stayed. He sealed the letter, ran down the steps, and sprang upon his horse.

As he rode past the inn, he saw the beggar, to whom he had given so much money the night before, sitting under the trees: the man was comfortably enjoying his dinner, and, as Edward passed, stood up, and made him the humblest obeisance. That figure had appeared to him yesterday, when Ottilie was on his arm; now it only served as a bitter reminiscence of the happiest hour of his life. His grief redoubled. The feeling of what he was leaving behind was intolerable. He looked again at the beggar. "Happy wretch!" he cried, "you can still feed upon the alms of yesterday, and I cannot any more on the happiness of yesterday!"

CHAPTER XVII.

OTTILIE heard some one ride away, and went to the window in time just to catch a sight of Edward's back. It was strange, she thought, that he should have left the house without seeing her, without having even wished her good morning. She grew uncomfortable; and her anxiety did not diminish when Charlotte took her out for a long walk, and talked of various other things, but not once, and apparently on purpose, mentioning her husband. When they returned, she found the table laid only with two covers.

It is unpleasant to miss even the most trifling thing to which we have been accustomed. In serious things, such a loss becomes miserably painful. Edward and the captain were not there. This had been the first time after a long interval that Charlotte herself had set out the table, and it seemed to Ottilie as if she was deposed. The two ladies sat opposite each other: Charlotte talked, without the least embarrassment, of the captain and his appointment, and of the little hope there was of seeing him again for a long time. The only comfort Ottilie could find for herself was in the idea that Edward had ridden after his friend, to accompany him a part of his journey.

On rising from table, however, they saw Edward's travelling-carriage under the window. Charlotte, a little as if she was put out, asked who had had it brought round there. She was told it was the valet, who had some things there to pack up. It required all Ottilie's self-command to conceal her wonder and her distress.

The valet came in, and asked if they would be so good as to let him have a drinking-cup of his master's, a pair of silver spoons, and a number of other things, which seemed to Ottilie to imply that he had gone some distance, and would be away for a long time.

Charlotte gave him a very cold, dry answer. She did not know what he meant, — he had everything belonging to his master under his own care. What the man wanted was, to speak a word to Ottilie, and on some pretence or other to get her out of the room: he made some clever excuse, and persisted in his request so far that Ottilie asked if she should go to look for the things for him. But Charlotte quietly said that she had better not. The valet had to depart, and the carriage rolled away.

It was a dreadful moment for Ottilie. She understood nothing, comprehended nothing. She could only feel that Edward had been parted from her for a long time. Charlotte felt for her situation, and left her to herself.

We will not attempt to describe what she went through, or how she wept. She suffered infinitely. She prayed that God would help her only over this one day. The day passed, and the night; and, when she came to herself again, she felt herself a changed being.

She had not regained her composure. She was not resigned: but, after having lost what she had lost, she was still alive; and there was still something for her to fear. Her anxiety, after returning to consciousness, was at once lest, now that the gentlemen were gone, she might be sent away too. She never guessed at Edward's threats, which had secured her remaining with her aunt. Yet Charlotte's manner served partially to reassure her. The latter exerted herself to find employment for the poor girl, and hardly ever — never if she could help it — left her out of her sight; and although she knew well how little words can do

against the power of passion, yet she knew, too, the sure though slow influence of thought and reflection, and therefore missed no opportunity of inducing Ottilie to talk with her on every variety of subject.

It was no little comfort to Ottilie when one day Charlotte took an opportunity of making (she did it on purpose) the wise observation, "How keenly grateful people were to us when we were able by stilling and calming them to help them out of the entanglements of passion! Let us set cheerfully to work," she said, "at what the men have left incomplete: we shall be preparing the most charming surprise for them when they return to us, and our temperate proceedings will have carried through and executed what their impatient natures would have spoiled."

"Speaking of temperance, my dear aunt, I cannot help saying how I am struck with the intemperance of men, particularly in respect of wine. It has often pained and distressed me, when I have observed how, for hours together, clearness of understanding, judgment, considerateness, and whatever is most amiable about them, will be utterly gone, and, instead of the good which they might have done if they had been themselves, most disagreeable things sometimes threaten. How often may not wrong, rash determinations have arisen entirely from that one cause!"

Charlotte assented, but she did not go on with the subject. She saw only too clearly that it was Edward of whom Ottilie was thinking. It was not exactly habitual with him, but he allowed himself much more frequently than was at all desirable to stimulate his enjoyment and his power of talking and acting by such indulgence. If what Charlotte had just said had set Ottilie thinking again about men, and particularly about Edward, she was all the more struck and startled when her aunt began to speak of the impending marriage of the captain as of a thing quite settled

and acknowledged, whereby everything appeared quite different from what Edward had previously led her to entertain. It made her watch every expression of Charlotte's, every hint, every action, every step. Ottilie had become jealous, sharp-eyed, and suspicious, without knowing it.

Meanwhile, Charlotte with her clear glance looked through all the circumstances of their situation, and made arrangements which would provide, among other advantages, full employment for Ottilie. She contracted her household, not parsimoniously, but into narrower dimensions; and indeed, in one point of view, these moral aberrations might be taken for a not unfortunate accident. For in the style in which they had been going on, they had fallen imperceptibly into extravagance; and from a want of seasonable reflection, from the rate at which they had been living, and from the variety of schemes into which they had been launching out, their fine fortune, which had been in excellent condition, had been shaken, if not seriously injured.

She did not interfere with the improvements going on in the park, but, on the contrary, sought to advance whatever might form a basis for future operations. But here, too, she assigned herself a limit. Her husband on his return should still find abundance to amuse himself with.

In all this work she could not sufficiently value the assistance of the young architect. In a short time the lake lay stretched out under her eyes, its new shores turfed and planted with the most discriminating and excellent judgment. The rough work at the new house was all finished. Everything which was necessary to protect it from the weather she took care to see provided, and there for the present she allowed it to rest in a condition in which what remained to be done could hereafter be readily commenced again. Thus

hour by hour she recovered her spirits and her cheerfulness. Ottilie only seemed to have done so. She was only for ever watching, in all that was said and done, for symptoms which might show her whether Edward would be soon returning; and this one thought was the only one in which she felt any interest.

She therefore welcomed the proposal that they should get together the boys of the peasants, and employ them in keeping the park clean and neat. Edward had long entertained the idea. A pleasant-looking sort of uniform was made for them, which they were to put on in the evenings, after they had been properly cleaned and washed. The wardrobe was kept in the castle; the more sensible and ready of the boys themselves were entrusted with the management of it, the architect acting as chief director. In a very short time, the children acquired a kind of character. It was found easy to mould them into what was desired, and they went through their work not without a sort of manœuvre. As they marched along, with their garden shears, their long-handled pruning-knives, their rakes, their little spades and hoes and sweeping-brooms; others following after these with baskets to carry off the stones and rubbish; and others, last of all, trailing along the heavy iron roller, — it was a thoroughly pretty, delightful procession. The architect observed in it a beautiful series of situations and occupations to ornament the frieze of a garden-house. Ottilie, on the other hand, could see nothing in it but a kind of parade, to salute the master of the house on his near return.

And this stimulated her, and made her wish to begin something of the sort herself. They had before endeavoured to encourage the girls of the village in knitting and sewing and spinning, and whatever else women could do; and, since what had been done for the improvement of the village itself, there had been a perceptible advance in these descriptions of industry.

Ottilie had given what assistance was in her power; but she had given it at random, as opportunity or inclination prompted her: now she thought she would go to work more satisfactorily and methodically. But a company is not to be formed out of a number of girls as easily as out of a number of boys. She followed her own good sense: and, without being exactly conscious of it, her efforts were solely directed toward connecting every girl as closely as possible each with her own home, her own parents, brothers, and sisters; and she succeeded with many of them. One lively little creature only was incessantly complained of as showing no capacity for work, and as never likely to do anything if she were left at home.

Ottilie could not be angry with the girl, for to herself the little thing was especially attached: she clung to her, went after her, and ran about with her, whenever she was permitted; and then she would be active and cheerful, and never tire. It appeared to be a necessity of the child's nature to hang about a beautiful mistress. At first Ottilie allowed her to be her companion: then she herself began to feel a sort of affection for her; and, at last, they never parted at all, and Nanny attended her mistress wherever she went.

The latter's footsteps were often bent toward the garden, where she liked to watch the beautiful show of fruit. It was just the end of the raspberry and cherry season, the few remains of which were no little delight to Nanny. On the other trees there was a promise of a magnificent crop for the autumn; and the gardener talked of nothing but his master, and how he wished that he might be at home to enjoy it. Ottilie could listen to the good old man for ever! He thoroughly understood his business; and Edward — Edward — Edward — was for ever the theme of his praise.

Ottilie observed how well all the grafts which had been budded in the spring had taken. "I only wish," the gardener answered, "my good master may come to enjoy them. If he were here this autumn, he would see what beautiful sorts there are in the old castle garden, which the late lord, his honoured father, put there. I think the fruit-gardeners that are now don't succeed as well as the Carthusians used to do. We find many fine names in the catalogue; and then we bud from them, and bring up the shoots; and, at last, when they come to bear, it is not worth while to have such trees standing in our garden."

Over and over again, whenever the faithful old servant saw Ottilie, he asked when his master might be expected home; and, when Ottilie had nothing to tell him, he would look vexed, and let her see in his manner that he thought she did not care to tell him: the sense of uncertainty which was thus forced upon her became painful beyond measure, and yet she could never be absent from these beds and borders. What she and Edward had sown and planted together were now in full flower, requiring no further care from her, except that Nanny should be at hand with the watering-pot: and who shall say with what sensations she watched the later flowers, which were just beginning to show, and which were to be in the bloom of their beauty on Edward's birthday, the holiday to which she had looked forward with such eagerness, when these flowers were to have expressed her affection and her gratitude to him; but the hopes which she had formed of that festival were dead now, and doubt and anxiety never ceased to haunt the soul of the poor girl.

Into real, open, hearty understanding with Charlotte, there was no more a chance of her being able to return; for, indeed, the position of these two ladies was very different. If things could remain in their old

state, if it were possible that they could return again into the smooth, even way of calm, ordered life, Charlotte gained everything: she gained happiness for the present, and a happy future opened before her. On the other hand, for Ottilie all was lost, — one may say all, for she had first found in Edward what life and happiness meant; and, in her present position, she felt an infinite and dreary chasm of which before she could have formed no conception. For a heart which seeks, does indeed feel that it wants something; a heart which has lost, feels that something is gone, — its yearning and its longing changes into uneasy impatience: and a woman's spirit, which is accustomed to waiting and to enduring, must now pass out from its proper sphere, become active, and attempt and do something to make its own happiness.

Ottilie had not given up Edward — how could she? — although Charlotte, wisely enough, in spite of her conviction to the contrary, assumed it as a thing of course, and resolutely took it as decided that a quiet, rational regard was possible between her husband and Ottilie. How often, however, did not Ottilie remain at nights, after bolting herself into her room, on her knees before the open box, gazing at the birthday presents, of which as yet she had not touched a single thing, — not cut out or made up a single dress! How often with the sunrise did the poor girl hurry out of the house, in which she once had found all her happiness, away into the free air, into the country which then had had no charms for her. Even on the solid earth she could not bear to stay: she would spring into the boat, and row out into the middle of the lake, and there, drawing out some book of travels, lie rocked by the motion of the waves, reading and dreaming that she was far away, where she would never fail to find her friend, — she remaining ever nearest to his heart, and he to hers.

CHAPTER XVIII.

It may easily be supposed that Mittler, — the strange, busy gentleman, whose acquaintance we have already made, — when he had received information of the calamity that had come upon his friends, felt desirous, though neither side had as yet called on him for assistance, to give proof of his friendship, and do what he could to help them in their misfortune. He thought it advisable, however, to wait first a little while; knowing too well, as he did, that it was more difficult to persons of culture in their moral perplexities, than the uncultivated. He left them, therefore, for some time to themselves: but at last he could withhold no longer; and he hastened to find Edward, whom he had already traced. His road led him to a pleasant valley, with green, sweetly wooded meadows, down the centre of which ran a never-failing stream, sometimes winding slowly along, then tumbling and rushing among rocks and stones. The gently sloping hills were covered with rich corn-fields and well-kept orchards. The villages not being situated too near each other, the whole had a peaceful character about it; and the detached scenes seemed designed expressly, if not for painting, at least for life.

At last he caught sight of a neatly kept farm, with a clean, modest dwelling-house situated in the middle of a garden. He conjectured that this was Edward's present abode, and he was not mistaken.

As for the latter, in his solitude he gave himself up entirely to his passion, thinking out plan after plan,

and indulging in all sorts of hopes. He could not deny that he longed to see Ottilie there; that he would like to carry her off there, to tempt her there; and whatever else (putting, as he now did, no check upon his thoughts) pleased to suggest itself, whether permitted or unpermitted. Then his imagination wavered, picturing every manner of possibility. If he could not have her there, if he could not lawfully possess her, he would secure to her the possession of the property for her own. There she should live for herself, silent, independently; she should be happy in that spot, — sometimes his self-torturing mood would lead him farther, — be happy in it, perhaps, with another.

Thus days passed in incessant oscillation between hope and suffering, between tears and happiness, between purposes, preparations, and despair. The sight of Mittler did not surprise him: he had long expected that he would come; and, now that he did, he was rather glad to see him. He believed that he had been sent by Charlotte. He had prepared all manner of excuses and delays, and, if these would not serve, decided refusals; or else, perhaps, he might hope to learn something of Ottilie, — and then he would welcome him as a messenger from heaven.

Not a little vexed and annoyed was Edward, therefore, when Mittler told him he had not come from the castle, but of his own accord. His heart closed up, and at first the conversation was at a standstill. Mittler, however, knew very well that a heart preoccupied with love has urgent need of utterance, of fully confiding to a friend what is passing within it; and he allowed himself, therefore, after a short interchange of words, for this once to go out of his character, and act the part of confidant in place of mediator. He had calculated justly. He had been finding fault in a good-natured way with Edward,

for burying himself in that lonely place, whereupon Edward replied:

"I do not know how I could spend my time more agreeably. I am always occupied with her, I am always close to her. I have the inestimable comfort of being able to think where Ottilie is at each moment, — where she is going, where she is standing, where she is reposing. I see her moving and acting before me as usual, ever doing or designing something which is to give me pleasure. But this will not always answer, for how can I be happy away from her? And then my fancy begins to work: I think what Ottilie should do to come to me; I write sweet, loving letters in her name to myself; and then I answer them, and collect the sheets. I have promised that I will take no steps to seek her, and that promise I will keep. But what ties her, that she should make no advances to me? Has Charlotte had the barbarity to exact a promise, to exact an oath, from her, not to write to me, not to send me a word, a hint, about herself? Very likely she has. It is but natural; and yet to me it is monstrous, it is horrible. If she loves me, — as I think, as I know, she does, — why does not she come to a resolution? why does not she venture to flee to me, and throw herself into my arms? I often think she ought to do it; and she could do it. If I ever hear a noise in the hall, I look toward the door. It must be she — she is coming — I look up to see her enter. Alas! because the possible is impossible, I let myself imagine that the impossible must become possible. At night, when I lie awake, and the lamp is casting an uncertain light about the room, I wish her form, her spirit, a sense of her presence, to hover past me, approach me, seize me, but for a moment, so that I might have an assurance that she is thinking of me, that she is mine. Only one pleasure remains to me. When I was with her I never dreamed of her; now

when I am far away, and, oddly enough, since I have made the acquaintance of other attractive persons in this neighbourhood, for the first time her figure appears to me in my dreams, as if she would say to me, 'Look at them, and at me. You will not find one more beautiful, more lovely, than I.' And thus her image mingles with my every dream. In whatever happens to me with her, our two beings become intertwined. Now we are signing a contract together. There is her handwriting, and there is mine; there is her name, and there is mine; and they are interwoven with, extinguished by, each other. Sometimes she does something which injures the pure idea I have of her; and then I feel how intensely I love her, by the indescribable anguish it causes me. Again, unlike herself, she will tease and vex me; and then at once the figure changes, her sweet, round, heavenly face becomes lengthened: it is not she, it is another; but I lie vexed, dissatisfied, and wretched. Laugh not, dear Mittler, or laugh on as you will. I am not ashamed of this attachment, of this — if you please to call it so — foolish, frantic passion. No, I never loved before. It is only now that I know what to love means. Till now, what I have called life was nothing but its prelude, — amusement, sport to kill the time with. I never lived till I knew her, till I loved her — entirely and only loved her. People have often said of me, not to my face, but behind my back, that in most things I was but a botcher and a bungler. It may be so, for I had not then found in what I could show myself a master. I should like to see the man who outdoes me in the talent of love. A miserable life it is, full of anguish and tears; but it is so natural, so dear, to me, that I could hardly change it for another."

Edward had relieved himself slightly by this violent unloading of his heart. But, in doing so, every feature of his strange condition had been brought out so clearly

before his eyes, that, overpowered by the pain of the struggle, he burst into tears, which flowed all the more freely as the heart had been made weak by telling it all.

Mittler, who was the less disposed to put a check on his inexorable good sense and strong, vigorous feeling, because by this violent outbreak of passion on Edward's part he saw himself driven far from the purpose of his coming, showed sufficiently decided marks of his disapprobation. Edward should act as a man, he said: he should remember what he owed to himself as a man. He should not forget that the highest honour was to command ourselves in misfortune; to bear pain, if it must be so, with equanimity and self-collectedness. That was what we should do, if we wished to be valued and looked up to as examples of what was right.

Stirred and penetrated as Edward was with the bitterest feelings, words like these could but have a hollow, worthless sound.

"It is well," he cried, "for the man who is happy, who has all that he desires, to talk; but he would be ashamed of it if he could see how intolerable it was to the sufferer. Nothing short of an infinite endurance would be enough; and, easy and contented as he was, what could he know of an infinite agony? There are cases," he continued, "yes, there are, where comfort is a lie, and despair is a duty. Go, heap your scorn upon the noble Greek, who well knows how to delineate heroes, when in their anguish he lets those heroes weep. He has even a proverb, 'Men who can weep are good.' Leave me, all you with dry heart and dry eye. Curses on the happy, to whom the wretched serve but for a spectacle! When body and soul are torn in pieces with agony, they are to bear it, — yes, to be noble and bear it, if they are to be allowed to go off the scene with applause. Like the gladiators, they

must die gracefully before the eyes of the multitude. My dear Mittler, I thank you for your visit; but really you would oblige me much, if you would go out, and look about you in the garden. We will meet again. I will try to compose myself, and become more like you."

Mittler was unwilling to let a conversation drop, which it might be difficult to begin again, and still persevered. Edward, too, was quite ready to go on with it; besides that of itself, it was tending toward the issue which he desired.

"Indeed," said the latter, "this thinking and arguing backwards and forwards leads to nothing. In this very conversation I myself have first come to understand myself: I have first felt decided as to what I must make up my mind to do. My present and my future life I see before me: I have to choose only between misery and happiness. Do you, my best friend, bring about the separation which must take place, which, in fact, is already made; gain Charlotte's consent for me. I will not enter into the reasons why I believe there will be the less difficulty in prevailing upon her. You, my dear friend, must go. Go, and give us all peace; make us all happy."

Mittler hesitated. Edward continued:

"My fate and Ottilie's cannot be divided, and shall not be shipwrecked. Look at this glass: our initials are engraved upon it. A gay reveller flung it into the air, that no one should drink of it more. It was to fall on the rock and be dashed to pieces; but it did not fall, it was caught. At a high price I bought it back: and now I drink out of it daily to convince myself that the connection between us cannot be broken; that destiny has decided."

"Alas, alas!" cried Mittler, "what must I not endure with my friends? Here comes superstition, which of all things I hate the worst, — the most mischievous

and accursed of all the plagues of mankind. We trifle with prophecies, with forebodings, and dreams, and give a seriousness to our every-day life with them; but when the seriousness of life itself begins to show, when everything around us is heaving and rolling, then come in these spectres to make the storm more terrible."

"In this uncertainty of life," cried Edward, "poised as it is between hope and fear, leave the poor heart its guiding-star. It may gaze toward it, if it cannot steer toward it."

"Yes, I might leave it; and it would be very well," replied Mittler, "if there were but one consequence to expect: but I have always found that nobody will attend to symptoms of warning. Man cares for nothing except what flatters him, and promises him fair; and his faith is alive exclusively for the sunny side."

Mittler, finding himself carried off into the shadowy regions, in which the longer he remained in them the more uncomfortable he always felt, was the more ready to assent to Edward's eager wish that he should go to Charlotte. Indeed, if he stayed, what was there further which at that moment he could urge on Edward? To gain time, to inquire in what state things were with the ladies, was the best thing which even he himself could suggest as at present possible.

He hastened to Charlotte, whom he found as usual, calm and in good spirits. She told him readily of everything which had occurred; for, from what Edward had said, he had only been able to gather the effects. On his own side, he felt his way with the utmost caution. He could not prevail upon himself even cursorily to mention the word separation. It was indeed a surprise to him, but, from his point of view, an unspeakably delightful one, when Charlotte, at the end of a number of unpleasant things, finished with saying:

"I must believe, I must hope, that things will all

work round again, and that Edward will return to me. How can it be otherwise, as soon as I become a mother?"

"Do I understand you right?" returned Mittler.

"Perfectly," Charlotte answered.

"A thousand times blessed be this news!" he cried, clasping his hands together. "I know the strength of this argument on the mind of a man. Many a marriage have I seen first cemented by it, and restored again when broken. Such a good hope as this is worth more than a thousand words. Now, indeed, it is the best hope which we can have. For myself, though," he continued, "I have all reason to be vexed about it. In this case I can see clearly no self-love of mine will be flattered. I shall earn no thanks from you by my services: my case is the same as that of a certain medical friend of mine, who succeeds in all cures which he undertakes with the poor for the love of God, but can seldom do anything for the rich who will pay him. Here, thank God, the thing cures itself, after all my talking and trying had proved fruitless!"

Charlotte now asked him if he would carry the news to Edward; if he would take a letter to him from her, and then see what should be done. But he declined undertaking this. "All is done," he cried: "do you write your letter — any messenger will do as well as I — I will come back to wish you joy. I will come to the christening!"

For this refusal she was vexed with him, as she frequently was. His eager, impetuous character brought about much good; but his over-haste was the occasion of many a failure. No one was more dependent than he on the impressions which he formed on the moment.

Charlotte's messenger came to Edward, who received him half in terror. The letter was to decide his fate, and it might as well contain No as Yes. He did not venture, for a long time, to open it. At last he tore

off the cover, and stood petrified at the following passage, with which it concluded:

"Remember the night-adventure when you visited your wife as a lover, — how you drew her to you, and clasped her as a well-beloved bride in your arms. In this strange accident let us revere the providence of Heaven, which has woven a new link to bind us, at the moment when the happiness of our lives was threatening to fall asunder, and to vanish."

What passed from that moment in Edward's soul it would be difficult to describe. Under the weight of such a stroke, old habits and fancies come out again to assist to kill the time and fill up the chasms of life. Hunting and fighting are an ever-ready resource of this kind for a nobleman: Edward longed for some outward peril, as a counterbalance to the storm within him. He craved for death, because the burden of life threatened to become too heavy for him to bear. It comforted him to think that he would soon cease to be, and so would make those whom he loved happy by his departure.

No one made any difficulty in his doing what he purposed, because he kept his intention a secret. He made his will with all due formalities. It gave him a very sweet feeling to secure Ottilie's fortune; provision was made for Charlotte, for the unborn child, for the captain, and for the servants. The war, which had again broken out, favoured his wishes: he had disliked exceedingly the half-soldiering which had fallen to him in his youth, and that was the reason why he had left the service. Now it gave him a fine exhilarating feeling to be able to rejoin it, under a commander of whom it could be said, that under his conduct death was likely and victory was sure.

Ottilie, when Charlotte's secret was made known to

her, bewildered by it, like Edward, and more than he, retired into herself, — she had nothing further to say: hope she could not, and wish she dared not. A glimpse into what was passing in her we can gather from her diary, some passages of which we think to communicate.

Elective Affinities

Part II.

CHAPTER I.

THERE often happens to us in common life what, in an epic poem, we are accustomed to praise as a stroke of art in the poet; namely, that when the chief figures go off the scene, withdraw into inactivity, some other or others, whom hitherto we have scarcely observed, come forward and fill their places. And these, putting out all their force, at once fix our attention and sympathy on themselves, and earn our praise and admiration.

Thus, after the captain and Edward were gone, the architect, of whom we have spoken, appeared every day a more important person. The ordering and executing of a number of undertakings depended entirely upon him, and he proved himself thoroughly understanding and businesslike in the style in which he went to work; while in a number of other ways he was able also to make himself of assistance to the ladies, and find amusement for their weary hours. His outward air and appearance were of the kind which win confidence and awake affection. A youth in the full sense of the word, well-formed, tall, perhaps a little too stout; modest without being timid, and easy without being obtrusive, — there was no work and no trouble which he was not delighted to take upon himself; and as he could keep accounts with great facility, the whole economy of the household soon was no secret to him: and everywhere his salutary influence made itself felt. Any stranger who came he was commonly set to entertain; and he was skilful, either at declining unexpected visits, or at least so far preparing the ladies for them as to spare them any disagreeableness.

One day he had a good deal of trouble with a young lawyer, who had been sent by a neighbouring nobleman to speak about a matter which, although of no particular moment, yet touched Charlotte to the quick. We have to mention this incident because it gave occasion for a number of things which otherwise might perhaps have remained long untouched.

We remember certain alterations which Charlotte had made in the churchyard. The entire body of the monuments had been removed from their places, and had been ranged along the walls of the church, leaning against the string-course. The remaining space had been levelled, except a broad walk which led up to the church, and past it to the opposite gate; and it had been all sown with various kinds of trefoil, which had shot up and flowered most beautifully.

The new graves were to follow one after another in a regular order from the end, but the spot on each occasion was to be carefully smoothed over and again sown. No one could deny, that on Sundays and holidays, when the people went to church, the change had given it a most cheerful and pleasant appearance. At the same time, the clergyman, an old man clinging to old customs, who at first had not been especially pleased with the alteration, had become thoroughly delighted with it, all the more because when, like Philemon with his Baucis, resting under the old linden-trees at his back door, instead of the humps and mounds, he had a beautiful, clean lawn to look out upon; which, moreover, Charlotte having secured the use of the spot to the parsonage, was no little convenience to his household.

Notwithstanding this, however, many members of the congregation had been displeased that the means of marking the spots where their forefathers rested had been removed, and all memorials of them thereby obliterated. However well preserved the monuments

might be, they could only show who had been buried, but not where he had been buried; and the *where*, as many maintained, was everything.

Of this opinion was a family in the neighbourhood, who for many years had been in possession of a considerable vault for a general resting-place of themselves and their relations, and in consequence had settled a small annual sum for the use of the church. And now this young lawyer had been sent to cancel this settlement, and to show that his client did not intend to pay it any more, because the condition under which it had been hitherto made had not been observed by the other party, and no regard had been paid to objection and remonstrance. Charlotte, who was the originator of the alteration herself, chose to speak to the young man, who, in a decided though not a violent manner, laid down the grounds on which his client proceeded, and gave occasion in what he said for much serious reflection.

"You see," he said, after a slight introduction, in which he sought to justify his peremptoriness, "you see, it is right for the lowest as well as for the highest to mark the spot which holds those who are dearest to him. The poorest peasant, who buries a child, finds it some consolation to plant a light wooden cross upon the grave, and hang a garland upon it, to keep alive the memorial, at least as long as the sorrow remains; although such a mark, like the mourning, will pass away with time. Those better off exchange these wooden crosses for others made of iron, and fix and protect them in various ways; and here we have endurance for many years. But because this too will sink at last, and become invisible, those who are able to bear the expense see nothing fitter than to raise a stone which shall promise to endure for generations, and which can be restored and made fresh again by posterity. Yet it is not this stone which attracts us:

it is that which is contained beneath it, which is entrusted, where it stands, to the earth. It is not the memorial so much, of which we speak, as the person himself; not of what once was, but of what is. Far better, far more closely, can I embrace some dear departed one in the mound which rises over his bed, than in a monumental writing which only tells us that once he was. In itself, indeed, it is but little; but around it, as around a central mark, the wife, the husband, the kinsman, the friend, after their departure, shall gather again: and the living shall have the right to keep far off all strangers and evil wishers from the side of the dear one who is sleeping there.

"And, therefore, I hold it quite fair and fitting that my principal shall withdraw his grant to you. It is, indeed, but too reasonable that he should do it; for the members of his family are injured in a way for which no compensation could be even proposed. They are deprived of the sad, sweet feelings of laying offerings on the remains of their dead, and of the one comfort in their sorrow of one day lying down at their side."

"The matter is not of that importance," Charlotte answered, "that we should disquiet ourselves about it with the vexation of a lawsuit. I regret so little what I have done, that I will gladly myself indemnify the church for what it loses through you. Only I must confess candidly to you, your arguments have not convinced me: the pure feeling of a universal equality at last after death seems to me more composing than this hard, determined persistence in our personalities, and in the conditions and circumstances of our lives. What do you say to it?" she added, turning to the architect.

"It is not for me," replied he, "either to argue or to attempt to judge in such a case. Let me venture, however, to say what my own art and my own habits of thinking suggest to me. Since we are no longer so happy

as to be able to press to our breasts the inurned remains of those we have loved; since we are neither wealthy enough nor of cheerful heart enough to preserve them undecayed in large elaborate sarcophagi; since, indeed, we cannot even find place any more for ourselves and ours in the churches, and are banished out into the open air, — we all, I think, ought to approve the method which you, my gracious lady, have introduced. If the members of a congregation are laid out side by side, they are resting by the side of and among their kindred: and, since the earth has to receive us all, I can find nothing more natural or more desirable than that the mounds, which, if they are thrown up, are sure to sink slowly in again together, should be smoothed off at once; and the covering, which all bear alike, will press lighter upon each."

"And is it all, is it all to pass away," said Ottilie, "without one token of remembrance, without anything to call back the past?"

"By no means," continued the architect: "it is not from remembrance, it is from *place*, that men should be set free. The architect, the sculptor, are highly interested that men should look to their art, to their hand, for a continuance of their being; and, therefore, I should wish to see well designed, well executed monuments, not sown up and down by themselves at random, but erected all in a single spot, where they can promise themselves endurance. Inasmuch as even the good and the great are contented to surrender the privilege of resting in person in the churches, *we* may, at least, erect there, or in some fair hall near the burying-place, either monuments or monumental writings. A thousand forms might be suggested for them, and a thousand ornaments with which they might be decorated."

"If the artists are so rich," replied Charlotte, "then, tell me how it is that they are never able to escape

from little obelisks, dwarf pillars, and urns for ashes. Instead of your thousand forms of which you boast, I have never seen anything but a thousand repetitions."

"It is very generally so with us," returned the architect, "but it is not universal; and very likely the right taste and the proper application of it may be a peculiar art. In this case especially we have this great difficulty, that the monument must be something cheerful, and yet commemorate a solemn subject; while its matter is melancholy, it must not itself be melancholy. As regards designs for monuments of all kinds, I have collected numbers of them; and I will take some opportunity of showing them to you: but at all times the fairest memorial of a man remains some likeness of himself. This, better than anything else, will give a notion of what he was: it is the best text for many or for few notes, — only it ought to be made when he is at his best age, and that is generally neglected. No one thinks of preserving forms while they are alive; and, if it is done at all, it is done carelessly and incompletely: and then comes death; a cast is swiftly taken, this mask is set upon a block of stone, — and that is what is called a bust. How seldom is the artist in a position to put any real life into such things as these!"

"You have contrived," said Charlotte, "without perhaps knowing it or wishing it, to lead the conversation altogether in my favour. The likeness of a man is quite independent: everywhere that it stands, it stands for itself; and we do not require it to mark the site of a particular grave. But I must acknowledge to you to having a strange feeling: even to portraits I have a kind of dislike. Whenever I see them, they seem to be silently reproaching me. They point to something far away from us, gone from us; and they remind me how difficult it is to pay right honour to the present. If we think how many people we have seen and known, and consider how little we have been to them, and how

little they have been to us, it is no very pleasant reflection. We have met a man of genius without having enjoyed much with him, a learned man without having learned from him, a traveller without having been instructed, a man to love without having shown him any kindness.

"And unhappily this is not the case only with accidental meetings. Societies and families behave in the same way toward their dearest members, towns toward their worthiest citizens, people toward their most admirable princes, nations toward their most distinguished men.

"I have heard people asked why we heard nothing but good spoken of the dead, while of the living it is never without some exception. The reply was, because from the former we have nothing any more to fear; while the latter may still, here or there, fall in our way. So unreal is our anxiety to preserve the memory of others, generally no more than a mere selfish amusement; and the real, holy, earnest feeling would be what should prompt us to be more diligent and assiduous in our attentions toward those who still are left to us."

the great Charlotte

CHAPTER II.

UNDER the stimulus of this accident, and of the conversations which arose out of it, they went the following day to look over the burying-place, for the ornamenting of which, and relieving it in some degree of its sombre look, the architect made many a happy proposal. His interest, too, had to extend itself to the church as well, a building which had attracted his attention from the moment of his arrival.

It had been standing for many centuries, built in old German style, the proportions good, the decorating elaborate and excellent; and one might easily gather that the architect of the neighbouring monastery had left the stamp of his art and of his love on this smaller building also: on the spectator it still made a solemn and agreeable impression, although the change in its internal arrangements for the Protestant service had taken from it something of its repose and majesty.

The architect found no great difficulty in prevailing on Charlotte to give him a considerable sum of money to restore it externally and internally, in the original spirit; and thus, as he thought, to bring it into harmony with the resurrection-field which lay in front of it. He had himself much practical skill; and a few labourers, who were still busy at the lodge, might easily be kept together until this pious work, too, should be completed.

The building itself, therefore, with all its environs, and whatever was attached to it, was now carefully and thoroughly examined; and then showed itself, to

the greatest surprise and delight of the architect, a little side chapel, which nobody had thought of, beautifully and delicately proportioned, and displaying still greater care and pains in its decoration. It contained, at the same time, many remnants, carved and painted, of the implements used in the old services, when the different festivals were distinguished by a variety of pictures and ceremonies, and each was celebrated in its own peculiar style.

It was impossible for him not at once to take this chapel into his plan; and he determined to bestow especial pains on the restoring of this little spot as a memorial of old times, and of their taste. He saw exactly how he would like to have the vacant surfaces of the walls ornamented, and delighted himself with the prospect of exercising his talent for painting upon them; but of this, at first, he made a secret to the rest of the party.

Before doing anything else, he fulfilled his promise of showing the ladies the various imitations of, and designs from, old monuments, vases, and other such things which he had made; and, when they came to speak of the simple barrow-sepulchres of the northern nations, he brought a collection of weapons and implements which had been found in them. He had got them exceedingly nicely and conveniently arranged in drawers and compartments, laid on boards cut to fit them, and covered over with cloth; so that these solemn old things, in the way he treated them, had a smart, dressy appearance; and it was like looking into the box of a trinket merchant.

Having once begun to show his curiosities, and finding them prove serviceable to entertain our friends in their loneliness, every evening he would produce one or other of his treasures. They were most of them of German origin, — pieces of metal, old coins, seals, and such like. All these things directed the imagination

back upon old times; and when at last they came to amuse themselves with the first specimens of printing, woodcuts, and the earliest copperplate engraving; and when the church, in the same spirit, was growing out, every day, more and more in form and colour like the past, — they had almost to ask themselves whether they really were living in a modern time, whether it were not a dream that manners, customs, modes of life, and convictions were all really so changed.

After such preparation, a great portfolio, which at last he produced, had the best possible effect. It contained, indeed, principally only outlines and figures; but, as these had been traced upon original pictures, they retained perfectly their ancient character; and most captivating indeed this character was to the spectators. All the figures breathed only the purest feeling; every one, if not noble, at any rate was good; cheerful composure, ready recognition of One above us, to whom all reverence is due; silent devotion, in love and tranquil expectation, was expressed on every face, on every gesture. The old bald-headed man, the curly-pated boy, the light-hearted youth, the earnest man, the glorified saint, the angel hovering in the air, — all seemed happy in an innocent, satisfied, pious expectation. The commonest object had a trait of celestial life; and every nature seemed adapted to the service of God, and to be, in some way or other, employed upon it.

Toward such a region most of them gazed as toward a vanished golden age, or on some lost paradise; only, perhaps, Ottilie had a chance of finding herself among beings of her own nature. Who could offer any opposition when the architect asked to be allowed to paint the spaces between the arches and the walls of the chapel in the style of these old pictures, and thereby leave his own distinct memorial at a place where life had gone so pleasantly with him?

He spoke of it with some sadness; for he could see, in the state in which things were, that his sojourn in such delightful society could not last for ever, — indeed, that perhaps it would now soon be ended.

For the rest, these days were not rich in incidents, yet full of occasions for serious entertainment. We therefore take the opportunity of communicating something of the remarks Ottilie noted down among her manuscripts, to which we cannot find a fitter transition than through a simile that suggested itself to us on contemplating her exquisite pages.

There is, we are told, a curious contrivance in the service of the English marine. The ropes in use in the royal navy, from the largest to the smallest, are so twisted that a red thread runs through them from end to end, which cannot be extracted without undoing the whole, and by which the smallest pieces may be recognised as belonging to the Crown.

Just so is there drawn through Ottilie's diary a thread of attachment and affection which connects it all together and characterises the whole. And thus these remarks, these observations, these extracted sentences, and whatever else it may contain, were, to the writer, of peculiar meaning. Even the few separate pieces which we select and transcribe will sufficiently explain our meaning.

FROM OTTILIE'S DIARY.

"To rest hereafter at the side of those whom we love is the most delightful thought which man can have when once he looks out beyond the boundary of life. What a sweet expression is that, 'He was gathered to his fathers!'"

"Of the various memorials and tokens which bring nearer to us the distant and the separated, none is so

satisfactory as a picture. To sit and talk to a beloved picture, even though it be unlike, has a charm in it, like the charm which there sometimes is in quarrelling with a friend. We feel, in a strange, sweet way, that we are divided and yet cannot separate."

"A person, in whose company we happen to be, affords us, sometimes, entertainment similar to that of a picture. He need not speak to us, he need not look at us, or take any notice of us; we look at him, we feel the relation in which we stand to him; such relation can even grow without his doing anything toward it, without his having any feeling of it: he is to us exactly as a picture."

"One is never satisfied with a portrait of a person that one knows. I have always felt for the portrait-painter on this account. One so seldom requires of people what is impossible, and of them we do really require what is impossible: they must gather up into their picture the relation of everybody to its subject, all their likings and all dislikings; they must not only paint a man as they see him, but as every one else sees him. It does not surprise me if such artists become by degree stunted, indifferent, and of but one idea; and, indeed, it would not matter what came of it, if it were not that in consequence we have to go without the pictures of so many persons near and dear to us."

"It is too true, the architect's collection of weapons and old implements, which were found with the bodies of their owners, covered in with great hills of earth and rock, proves to us how useless is man's so great anxiety to preserve his personality after he is dead; and so inconsistent people are! The architect confesses to have himself opened these barrows of his

forefathers, and yet goes on occupying himself with memorials for posterity."

"But after all why should we take it so much to heart? Is all that we do, done for eternity? Do we not put on our dress in the morning, to throw it off again at night? Do we not go abroad to return home again? And why should we not wish to rest by the side of our friends, though it were but for a century?"

"When we see the many gravestones which have fallen in, which have been defaced by the footsteps of the congregation, which lie buried under the ruins of the churches, that have themselves crumbled together over them, we may fancy the life after death to be as a second life, into which a man enters in the figure, or the picture, or the inscription, and lives longer there than when he was really alive. But this figure also, this second existence, dies out too, sooner or later. Time will not allow himself to be cheated of his rights with the monuments of men or with themselves."

CHAPTER III.

It causes us so agreeable a sensation to occupy ourselves with what we can only half do, that no person ought to find fault with the amateur applying himself to an art he can never learn, nor blame an artist disposed to pass beyond the boundaries of his art, and amuse himself in some other branch of art akin to his own. With such complacency of feeling we regard the preparation of the architect for the painting the chapel. The colours were got ready, the measurements taken, the cartoons designed. He had made no attempt at originality, but kept close to his outlines: his only care was to make a proper distribution of the sitting and floating figures, so as tastefully to ornament his space with them.

The scaffoldings were erected. The work went forward; and, as soon as anything had been done on which the eye could rest, he could have no objection to Charlotte and Ottilie coming to see how he was getting on.

The lifelike faces of the angels, their robes waving against the blue sky-ground, delighted the eye; while their still and holy air calmed and composed the spirit, and produced the most delicate effect.

The ladies had joined him on the scaffolding; and Ottilie had scarcely observed how easily and regularly the work was being done, than the power which had been fostered in her by her early education at once appeared to develop. She took a brush, and, with a few words of direction, painted a richly folding robe with as much delicacy as skill.

Charlotte, who was always glad when Ottilie would occupy or amuse herself with anything, left them both in the chapel, and went to follow the train of her own thoughts, and work her way for herself through her cares and anxieties which she was unable to communicate to a creature.

When ordinary men allow themselves to be worked up by common, every-day difficulties into fever-fits of passion, we can give them nothing but a compassionate smile. But we look with a kind of awe on a spirit in which the seed of a great destiny has been sown, which must abide the unfolding of the germ, and neither dare nor can do anything to precipitate either the good or the ill, either the happiness or the misery, which is to arise out of it.

Edward had sent an answer by Charlotte's messenger, who had come to him in his solitude. It was written with kindness and interest, but was rather composed and serious than warm and affectionate. He had vanished almost immediately after, and Charlotte could learn no news about him; till, at last, she accidentally found his name in the newspaper, where he was mentioned with honour among those who had most distinguished themselves in a late important engagement. She now understood the method which he had taken; she perceived that he had escaped from great danger; only she was convinced at the same time that he would seek out greater; and it was all too clear to her, that, in every sense, he would hardly be withheld from any extremity.

She had to bear about this perpetual anxiety in her thoughts; and, turn which way she would, there was no light in which she could look at it that would give her comfort.

Ottilie, never dreaming of anything of this, had taken to the work in the chapel with the greatest interest; and she had easily obtained Charlotte's per-

mission to go on with it regularly. So now all went swiftly forward, and the azure heaven was soon peopled with worthy inhabitants. By continual practice, both Ottilie and the architect had gained more freedom with the last figures: they became perceptibly better. The faces, too, which had been all left to the architect to paint, showed by degrees a very singular peculiarity. They began all of them to resemble Ottilie. The contact with the beautiful girl had made so strong an impression on the soul of the young man, who had no variety of faces preconceived in his mind, that by degrees, on the way from the eye to the hand, nothing was lost, and both worked in exact harmony together. Enough; one of the last faces succeeded perfectly, so that it seemed as if Ottilie herself was looking down out of the spaces of the sky.

They had finished the vault. The walls they proposed to leave plain, and only to cover them over with a bright brown colour. The delicate pillars and the quaintly moulded ornaments were to be distinguished from them by a dark shade. But, as in such things one thing always leads on to another, they determined at least on having festoons of flowers and fruit, which should, as it were, unite together heaven and earth. Here Ottilie was in her element. The gardens provided the most perfect patterns; and, although the wreaths were as rich as they could make them, it was all finished sooner than they had supposed possible.

It was still looking rough and disorderly. The scaffolding-poles had been run together, the planks thrown one on the top of the other, the uneven pavement was yet more disfigured by the party-coloured stains of the paint which had been spilt on it.

The architect begged that the ladies would give him a week to himself, and during that time would not

enter the chapel. One fine evening he came to them, and begged them both to go and see it. He did not wish to accompany them, he said, and at once took his leave.

"Whatever surprise he may have designed for us," said Charlotte, as soon as he was gone, "I cannot myself just now go down there. You can go by yourself, and tell me all about it. No doubt he has been doing something which we shall like. I will enjoy it first in your description, and afterward it will be the more charming in the reality."

Ottilie, who knew well that in many cases Charlotte took care to avoid everything which could produce emotion, and particularly disliked to be surprised, set off down the walk by herself, and looked round involuntarily for the architect, who, however, was nowhere to be seen, and must have concealed himself somewhere. She walked into the church, which she found open. It had been finished before, cleaned, and consecrated. She went on to the chapel-door; its heavy mass, all overlaid with iron, yielded easily to her touch; and she found an unexpected sight in a familiar spot.

A solemn, beautiful light streamed in through the one tall window. It was filled with stained glass, gracefully put together. The entire chapel had thus received a strange tone, and called forth a peculiar frame of mind. The beauty of the vaulted ceiling and the walls was set off by the elegance of the pavement, which was composed of peculiarly shaped tiles, fastened together with gypsum, and forming exquisite patterns as they lay. This, and the coloured glass for the windows, the architect had prepared without their knowledge; and a short time was sufficient to have it put in its place.

Seats had been provided as well. Among the relics of the old church some finely carved chancel-chairs

had been discovered, which now were standing about at convenient places along the walls.

The parts which she knew so well, now meeting her as an unfamiliar whole, delighted Ottilie. She stood still, walked up and down, looked and looked again. At last she seated herself in one of the chairs; and it seemed, as she gazed up and down, as if she was, and yet was not; as if she felt, and did not feel; as if all this would vanish from before her, and she would vanish from herself; and it was only when the sun left the window, on which before it had been shining full, that she awoke to possession of herself, and hastened back to the castle.

She did not hide from herself the strange epoch at which this surprise had occurred to her. It was the evening of Edward's birthday. Very differently she had hoped to keep it. How was not everything to be dressed out for this festival! and now all the splendour of the autumn flowers remained ungathered. Those sunflowers were still turned to the sky; those asters still looked out with quiet, modest eye; and whatever of them all had been wound into wreaths had served as patterns for the decorating a spot which, if it was not to remain a mere artist's fancy, was only adapted as a general mausoleum.

And then she had to remember the impetuous eagerness with which Edward had kept her birthday-feast. She thought of the newly erected lodge, under the roof of which they had promised themselves so much enjoyment. The fireworks flashed and hissed again before her eyes and ears: the more lonely she was, the more keenly her imagination brought it all before her. But she felt herself only the more alone. She no longer leaned upon his arm, and she had no hope ever any more to rest herself upon it.

FROM OTTILIE'S DIARY

"I have been struck with an observation of the young architect.

"In the case of the creative artist, as in that of the artisan, it is clear that man is least permitted to appropriate to himself what is most entirely his own. His works forsake him as the birds forsake the nest in which they were hatched.

"The fate of the architect is the strangest of all in this way. How often he expends his whole soul, his whole heart and passion, to produce buildings into which he himself may never enter. The halls of kings owe their magnificence to him, but he has no enjoyment of them in their splendour. In the temple he draws a partition-line between himself and the holy of holies: he may never more set his foot upon the steps which he has laid down for the heart-thrilling ceremonial, as the goldsmith may only adore from far off the monstrance whose enamel and whose jewels he has himself set together. The builder surrenders to the rich man, with the key of his palace, all pleasure and all right there, and never shares with him in the enjoyment of it. And must not art in this way, step by step, draw off from the artist, when the work, like a child who is provided for, has no more to fall back upon its father? And what a power there must be in art itself, for its own self-advancing, when it has been obliged to shape itself almost solely out of what was open to all, only out of what was the property of every one, and therefore also of the artist!"

"There is a conception among ancient nations, which is awful, and may almost seem terrible. They pictured their forefathers to themselves sitting round on thrones, in enormous caverns, in silent converse; when a newcomer entered, if he were worthy enough,

they rose up, and inclined their heads to welcome him. Yesterday, as I was sitting in the chapel, and other carved chairs stood round like that in which I was, the thought of this came over me, with a soft, pleasant feeling. Why cannot you stay sitting here? I said to myself; stay here sitting, meditating with yourself long, long, long, till at last your friends come, and you rise up to them, and with a gentle inclination direct them to their places. The coloured window-panes convert the day into a solemn twilight; and some one should set up for us an ever-burning lamp, that the night might not be utter darkness."

"We may imagine ourselves in what situation we please, we always conceive ourselves as *seeing*. I believe man dreams only so that he may never cease to see. Some day, perhaps, the inner light will come out from within us; and we shall not any more require another.

"The year dies away: the wind sweeps over the stubble, and there is nothing left to stir under its touch. But the red berries on yonder tall tree seem as if they would still remind us of brighter things, and the stroke of the thrasher's flail awakes the thought how much of nourishment and life lies buried in the mowed ear."

CHAPTER IV.

How strangely, after all this, with the sense so vividly impressed on her of mutability and perishableness, must Ottilie have been affected by the news which could not any longer be kept concealed from her, that Edward had exposed himself to the uncertain chances of war! Unhappily, none of the observations which she had occasion to make upon it escaped her. But it is well for us that man can only endure a certain degree of unhappiness: what is beyond that either annihilates him, or passes by him, and leaves him apathetic. There are situations in which hope and fear run together, in which they mutually destroy one another, and lose themselves in a dull indifference. If it were not so, how could we bear to know of those who are most dear to us being in hourly peril, and yet go on as usual with our ordinary every-day life?

It was, therefore, as if some good genius was caring for Ottilie, that, all at once, this stillness, in which she seemed to be sinking from loneliness and want of occupation, was suddenly invaded by a wild army, which, while it gave her externally abundance of employment, and so took her out of herself, at the same time awoke in her the consciousness of her own power.

Charlotte's daughter, Luciana, had scarcely left the school and gone out into the great world; scarcely had she found herself at her aunt's house in the midst of a large society, — than her anxiety to please produced its effect in really pleasing: and a young, very wealthy, man soon experienced a passionate desire to make her

his own. His large property gave him a right to have the best of everything for his use; and nothing seemed to be wanting to him except a perfect wife, for whom, as for the rest of his good fortune, he should be the envy of the world.

This incident in her family had been for some time occupying Charlotte. It had engaged all her attention, and taken up her whole correspondence, except so far as this was directed to the obtaining news of Edward: so that latterly Ottilie had been left more than was usual to herself. She knew, indeed, of an intended visit from Luciana. She had been making various changes and arrangements in the house in preparation for it, but she had no notion that it was so near. Letters, she supposed, would first have to pass, setting the time, and making arrangements: when the storm broke suddenly over the castle and over herself.

Up drove, first, lady's maids and men servants, their carriage loaded with trunks and boxes. The household was already swelled to double or to treble its size, and then appeared the visitors themselves. There was the great-aunt, with Luciana and some of her friends, and then the bridegroom with some of his friends. The entrance-hall was full of things, — bags, portmanteaus, and leather articles of every sort. The boxes had to be got out of their covers, and that was infinite trouble; and of luggage and of rummage there was no end. At intervals, moreover, there were violent showers, giving rise to much inconvenience. Ottilie encountered all this confusion with the easiest equanimity, and her happy talent showed in its fairest light. In a very little time she had brought things to order, and disposed of them. Every one found his room; every one had his things exactly as they wished; and all thought themselves well attended to, because they were not prevented from attending on themselves.

The journey had been long and fatiguing, and they

would all have been glad of a little rest after it. The bridegroom would have liked to pay his respects to his mother-in-law, express his pleasure, his gratitude, and so on. But Luciana could not rest. She had now arrived at the happiness of being able to mount a horse. The bridegroom had beautiful horses, and mount they must on the spot. Clouds and wind, rain and storm, they were nothing to Luciana; and now it was as if they only lived to get wet through, and to dry themselves again. If she took a fancy to go out walking, she never thought what sort of dress she had on, or what her shoes were like; she must go and see the grounds of which she had heard so much: what could not be done on horseback, she ran through on foot. In a little while she had seen everything, and given her opinion about everything, and with such rapidity of character it was not easy to contradict or oppose her. The whole household had much to suffer, but most particularly the lady's maids, who were at work from morning to night, washing and ironing and stitching.

As soon as she had exhausted the house and the park, she thought it was her duty to pay visits all round the neighbourhood. As they rode and drove very fast, the visits extended to a considerable distance. The castle was overrun with people returning visits; and, that they might not miss one another, certain days were set apart for being at home.

Charlotte, in the meantime, with her aunt, and the man of business of the bridegroom, was occupied in determining about the settlements; and it was left to Ottilie, with those under her, to take care that all this crowd of people were properly provided for. Gamekeepers and gardeners, fishermen and shop-dealers, were set in motion; Luciana always showing herself like the blazing nucleus of a comet with its long tail trailing behind it. The ordinary amusements of the

parties soon became too insipid for her taste. Hardly would she leave the old people in peace at the card-table. Whoever could by any means be set moving (and who could resist the charm of being pressed by her into service?) must up, if not to dance, then to play at forfeits, or some other game, where they were to be victimised and tormented. Notwithstanding all that, however, and although afterward the redeeming of the forfeits had to be settled with herself, yet of those who played with her, never any one, especially never any man, let him be of what sort he would, went quite empty-handed away. Indeed, some old people of rank who were there, she succeeded in completely winning over to herself, by having contrived to find out their birthdays or christening-days, and marking them with some particular celebration. In all this she showed a skill not a little remarkable. Every one saw himself favoured, and each considered himself to be the one most favoured, — a weakness of which the oldest person of the party was the most notably guilty.

It seemed to be a sort of pride with her, that men who had anything remarkable about them, — rank, character, or fame, — she must and would gain for herself. Gravity and seriousness she made give way to her; and, wild, strange creature as she was, she found favour even with discretion itself. Not that the young were at all cut short in consequence. Everybody had his share, his day, his hour, in which she contrived to charm and to enchain him. It was, therefore, natural enough that before long she should have had the architect in her eye, looking out so unconsciously as he did from under his long black hair, and standing so calm and quiet in the background. To all her questions she received short, sensible answers; but he did not seem inclined to allow himself to be carried away farther: and at last, half provoked, half in malice,

she resolved that she would make him the hero of a day, and so gain him for her court.

It was not for nothing that she had brought that quantity of luggage with her. Much, indeed, had followed her afterward. She had provided herself with an endless variety of dresses. When it took her fancy, she would change her dress three or four times a day, usually wearing something of an ordinary kind, but making her appearance suddenly at intervals in a thorough masquerade-dress, as a peasant-girl or a fish-maiden, as a fairy or a flower-girl; and this would go on from morning till night. Sometimes she would even disguise herself as an old woman, that her young face might peep out the fresher from under the cap; and so utterly in this way did she confuse and mix together the actual and the fantastic, that people thought they were living with a sort of drawing-room witch.

But the principal use which she had for these disguises were pantomimic tableaux and dances, in which she was skilful in expressing a variety of character. A cavalier in her suite had arranged to play on the piano, by way of accompaniment to her gestures, what little music was required: they needed only to exchange a few words, and they at once understood one another.

One day, in a pause of a brilliant ball, they were called upon suddenly to extemporise (it was on a private hint from themselves) one of these exhibitions. Luciana seemed embarrassed, taken by surprise, and, contrary to her custom, let herself be asked more than once. She could not decide upon her character, desired the party to choose, and asked, like an *improvvisatore*, for a subject. At last her musical assistant, with whom all had been previously arranged, sat down at the instrument, and began to play a mourning-march, calling on her to give them the "Artemisia" which she had been studying so admirably. She consented, and,

after a short absence, reappeared, to the sad, tender music of the dead march, in the form of the royal widow, with measured step, carrying an urn of ashes before her. A large black tablet was borne in after her, and a carefully cut piece of chalk in a gold pencil case.

One of her admirers and helpers, into whose ear she whispered something, went directly to call the architect, to desire him, and, if he would not come, to drag him up, as master-builder, to draw the grave for the mausoleum, and to tell him at the same time that he was not to play the statist, but enter earnestly into his part as one of the performers.

Embarrassed as the architect outwardly appeared (for in his black, close-fitting, modern civilian's dress, he formed a wonderful contrast with the gauze, crape, fringes, tinsel, tassels, and crown), he very soon composed himself internally; and the scene became all the more strange. With the greatest gravity he placed himself in front of the tablet, which was supported by a couple of pages, and drew carefully an elaborate tomb, which, indeed, would have suited better a Lombard than a Carian prince; but it was in such beautiful proportions, so solemn in its parts, so full of genius in its decoration, that the spectators watched it growing with delight, and wondered at it when it was finished.

All this time he had not once turned toward the queen, but had given his whole attention to what he was doing. At last, when, bowing to her, he signified that he thought he had fulfilled her commands, she reached out the urn to him, expressing her desire to see it represented on the top of the monument. He complied, although unwillingly; as it would not suit the character of the rest of his design. Luciana was now at last freed from her impatience. Her intention had been by no means to get a scientific drawing out of him. If he had only made a few strokes, sketched

something which should have looked like a monument, and devoted the rest of his time to her, it would have been far more what she had wished, and would have pleased her a great deal better. His manner of proceeding had thrown her into the greatest embarrassment. For although in her sorrow, in her directions, in her gestures, in her approbation of the work as it slowly rose before her, she had tried to manage some sort of change of expression, and although she had hung about close to him, only to place herself into some sort of relation to him, yet he had kept himself throughout too stiff; so that too often she had been driven to take refuge with her urn: she had to press it to her heart and look up to heaven; and at last, a situation of that kind having a necessary tendency to intensify, she made herself more like a widow of Ephesus than a Queen of Caria. Thus the representation lasted a long time. The musician, who had usually patience enough, did not know any more what strain to strike up. He thanked God when he saw the urn stand on the pyramid, and involuntarily his tune, as the queen was going to express her gratitude, changed to a merry air, by which the whole thing lost its character. The company, however, was quite cheered up by it, and forthwith separated; some going up to express their delight and admiration of the lady for her excellent performance, and some praising the architect for his most artist-like and beautiful drawing.

The bridegroom especially paid marked attention to the architect. "I am vexed," he said, "that the drawing should be so perishable: you will permit me, however, to have it taken to my room, where I should much like to talk to you about it."

"If it would give you any pleasure," said the architect, "I can lay before you a number of highly finished designs for buildings and monuments of this kind, of which this is but a mere hasty sketch."

Ottilie was standing at no great distance, and went up to them. "Do not forget," she said to the architect, "to take an opportunity of letting the baron see your collection. He is a friend of art and of antiquity. I should like you to become better acquainted."

Luciana was passing at the moment. "What are they speaking of?" she asked.

"Of a collection of works of art," replied the baron, "which this gentleman possesses, and which he is good enough to say that he will show us."

"Oh, let him bring them immediately!" cried Luciana: "you will bring them, will you not?" she added, in a soft and sweet tone, taking both his hands in hers.

"The present is scarcely a fitting time," the architect answered.

"What!" Luciana cried, in a tone of authority: "you will not obey the command of your queen?" and then she begged him again with some piece of absurdity.

"Do not be obstinate," said Ottilie, in a scarcely audible voice.

The architect left them with a bow, signifying neither assent nor refusal.

He was hardly gone, when Luciana was flying up and down the saloon with a greyhound. "Alas!" she exclaimed, as she ran accidentally against her mother, "am I not an unfortunate creature? I have not brought my monkey with me. They told me I had better not, but I am sure it was nothing but the laziness of my people; and it is such a delight to me. But I will have it brought after me: somebody shall go and fetch it. If I could only see a picture of the dear creature, it would be a comfort to me: I certainly will have his picture taken, and it shall never be out of my sight."

"Perhaps I can comfort you," replied Charlotte. "There is a whole volume full of the most wonderful

ape-faces in the library, which you can have fetched if you like."

Luciana shrieked for joy. The great folio was produced instantly. The sight of these hideous creatures, so like to men, and with the resemblance even more caricatured by the artist, gave Luciana the greatest delight. It was her especial delight to find some one of her acquaintance whom the animals resembled. "Is that not like my uncle!" she remorselessly exclaimed; "and here, look, here is my milliner M——; and here is Parson S——; and here the image of that creature — bodily! After all, these monkeys are the real *incroyables;* and it is inconceivable why they are not admitted into the best society."

It was in the best society that she said this, and yet no one took it ill of her. People had become accustomed to allow her so many liberties in her prettinesses, that at last they came to allow them in what was unpretty.

During this time, Ottilie was talking to the bridegroom; she was looking anxiously for the return of the architect, whose serious and tasteful collection was to deliver the party from the apes; and, in the expectation of it, she had made it the subject of her conversation with the baron, and directed his attention on various things which he was to see. But the architect stayed away; and when at last he made his appearance he lost himself in the crowd, without having brought anything with him, and without seeming as if he had been asked for anything.

For a moment Ottilie became — what shall we call it? — annoyed, put out, perplexed. She had been saying so much about him — she had promised the bridegroom an hour of enjoyment after his own heart; and, with all the depth of his love for Luciana, he was evidently suffering from her present behaviour.

The monkeys had to give place to a collation. Round

games followed, and then more dancing; at last, a general uneasy vacancy, with fruitless attempts at resuscitating exhausted amusements, which lasted this time, as indeed they usually did, long past midnight. It had already become a habit with Luciana to be never able to get out of bed in the morning or into it at night.

About this time, the incidents noticed in Ottilie's diary become more rare; while we find a larger number of maxims and sentences drawn from life and relating to life. It is not conceivable that the larger proportion of these could have arisen from her own reflection; and most likely some one had shown her varieties of them, and she had written out what took her fancy. Many, however, with an internal bearing, can be easily recognised by the red thread.

FROM OTTILIE'S DIARY.

"We like to look into the future, because we feel as if we could guide by our silent wishes in our own favour the chances hovering in it."

"We seldom find ourselves in a large party without thinking, the accident which brings so many here together, should bring our friends to us as well."

"Let us live in as small a circle as we will, we are either debtors or creditors before we have had time to look round."

"If we meet a person who is under an obligation to us, we remember it immediately. But how often may we meet people to whom we are ourselves under obligation, without its even occurring to us!"

"It is nature to communicate one's self: it is culture to receive what is communicated as it is given."

"No one would talk much in society, if he only knew how often he misunderstands others."

"One alters so much what one has heard from others in repeating it, only because one has not understood it."

"Whoever indulges long in monologue in the presence of others, without flattering his listeners, provokes ill-will."

"Every word a man utters provokes the opposite opinion."

"Argument and flattery are but poor elements out of which to form a conversation."

"The most pleasant kind of society is that in which those composing it have an easy and natural respect for one another."

"There is nothing wherein people betray their character more than in what they find to laugh at."

"The ridiculous arises out of a moral contrast, in which two things are brought together before the mind in an innocent way."

"The material man often laughs where there is nothing to laugh at. Whatever moves him, his inner nature comes to the surface."

"The man of understanding finds almost everything ridiculous; the man of higher insight scarcely anything."

"Some one found fault with an elderly man for continuing to pay attention to young ladies. 'It is the only means,' he replied, 'of keeping one's self young; and everybody likes to do that.'"

"People will allow their faults to be shown them; they will let themselves be punished for them; they will patiently endure many things because of them; they only become impatient when they have to lay them aside."

"Certain defects are necessary for the existence of individuality. We should not be pleased if old friends were to lay aside certain peculiarities."

"There is a saying, 'He will die soon,' when a man acts unlike himself."

"What kind of defects may we bear with and even cultivate in ourselves? Such as rather give pleasure to others than injure them."

"The passions are defects or excellencies only in excess."

"Our passions are true phœnixes: as the old burn out, the new straight rise up out of the ashes."

"Violent passions are incurable diseases: the means which will cure them are what first make them thoroughly dangerous."

"Passion is both raised and softened by confession. In nothing, perhaps, were the middle way more desirable, than in knowing what to say and what not to say to those we love."

CHAPTER V.

So swept on Luciana in the social whirlpool, driving the rush of life along before her. Her court multiplied daily, partly because her impetuosity roused and attracted so many, partly because she knew how to attach the rest to her by kindness and attention. Generous she was in the highest degree: her aunt's affection for her, and her bridegroom's love, had heaped her with beautiful and costly presents; but she seemed as if nothing which she had was her own, and as if she did not know the value of the things which had streamed in upon her. One day she saw a young lady looking rather poorly dressed by the side of the rest of the party; and she did not hesitate a moment to take off a rich shawl which she was wearing, and hang it over her, — doing it, at the same time, in such a humourous, graceful way, that no one could refuse such a present so given. One of her courtiers always carried about a purse, with orders to inquire, in whatever place they passed through, for the most aged and most helpless persons, and give them relief, at least for the moment. In this way she gained for herself all round the country a reputation for charitableness, which grew, at times, somewhat inconvenient, through being molested by far too many persons needing help.

Nothing, however, so much added to her popularity as her steady and consistent kindness toward an unhappy young man, who shrank from society because, while otherwise handsome and well formed, he had lost his right hand, although with high honour, in

action. This mutilation weighed so heavily upon his spirits, it was so annoying to him that every new acquaintance he made had to be told the story of his misfortune, that he chose rather to shut himself up altogether, devoting himself to reading and other studious pursuits, and would have no dealings whatever with society.

She heard of the state of this young man. At once she contrived to prevail upon him to come to her, first to small parties, then to greater, and then out into the world with her. She showed more attention to him than to any other person: particularly she endeavoured, by the services which she pressed upon him, to make him sensible of what he had lost in labouring herself to supply it. At dinner, she would make him sit next to her: she cut up his food for him, that he might only have to use his fork. If people older or of higher rank prevented her from being close to him, she would extend her attention to him across the entire table; and the servants were hurried off to supply to him what distance threatened to deprive him of. At last she encouraged him to write with his left hand. All his attempts he was to address to her; and thus, whether far or near, she always kept herself in correspondence with him. The young man did not know what had happened to him, and from that moment a new life opened out before him.

One may perhaps suppose that such behaviour must have caused some uneasiness to her bridegroom. But, in fact, it was quite the reverse. He admired her exceedingly for her exertions, and had the more reason for feeling entirely satisfied about her, as she had certain features in her character almost in excess, which kept anything in the slightest degree dangerous utterly at a distance. She would run about with anybody, just as she fancied: no one was free from danger of a push or a pull, or of being made the object of some

sort of freak; but no person ever ventured to do the same to her, — no person dared to touch her, or return, in the remotest degree, any liberty which she had taken herself. She kept every one within the strictest bounds of propriety in their behaviour to herself; while she, in her own behaviour, was every moment overleaping them.

On the whole, one might have supposed it to be a maxim with her to expose herself indifferently to praise or blame, to regard or to dislike. If in various ways she took pains to win people's favour, she commonly herself spoiled all the good she had done, by an ill tongue which spared no one. Not a visit was ever paid in the neighbourhood, not a single piece of hospitality was ever shown to herself and her party among the surrounding castles or mansions, but what on her return her excessive recklessness let it appear that all men and all human things she was only inclined to see on the ridiculous side.

There were three brothers, who, purely out of compliment to each other which should marry first, had been overtaken by old age before they had got the question settled: here was a little, young wife with a great, old husband; there, on the other hand, was a dapper little man and an unwieldy giantess. In one house, every step one took one stumbled over a child; another, however many people were crammed into it, never would seem full, because there were no children there at all. Old couples (supposing the estate was not entailed) should get themselves buried as quickly as possible, that such a thing as a laugh might be heard again in the house. Young married people should travel: housekeeping did not sit well upon them. And as she treated the persons, so she treated what belonged to them, — their houses, their furniture, their dinner-services, — everything. The ornaments of the walls of the rooms most particularly provoked her

funny remarks. From the oldest tapestry to the most modern printed paper; from the noblest family pictures to the most frivolous new copperplate, — one as well as the other had to suffer, one as well as the other had to be pulled in pieces by her satirical tongue: so that, indeed, one had to wonder how, for twenty miles around, anything continued to exist.

It was not, perhaps, exactly malice which produced all this destructiveness; it was wilfulness and selfishness that ordinarily set her off upon it: but a genuine bitterness grew up in her feelings toward Ottilie.

She looked down with disdain on the calm, uninterrupted activity of the sweet girl, which every one had observed and admired: and, when something was said of the care which Ottilie took of the garden and of the hothouses, she not only spoke scornfully of it, in affecting to be surprised, if it were so, at there being neither flowers nor fruit to be seen, not caring to consider that they were living in the depth of winter, but every faintest scrap of green, every leaf, every bud which showed, she chose to have picked every day, and squandered on ornamenting the rooms and tables; and Ottilie and the gardener were not a little distressed to see their hopes for the next year, and perhaps for a longer time, destroyed in this wanton recklessness.

As little would she be content to leave Ottilie to her quiet work at home, in which she could live with so much comfort. Ottilie had to go with them on their pleasure-parties and sleighing-parties: she had to be at the balls which were being got up all about the neighbourhood. She was not to mind the snow, or the cold, or the night air, or the storm: other people did not die of such things, and why should she? The delicate girl suffered not a little from it all, but Luciana gained nothing. For although Ottilie went about very simply dressed, she was always, at least so the men thought, the most beautiful. A soft attractive-

ness gathered them all about her: no matter whereabouts in the great rooms she was, first or last, it was always the same. Even Luciana's bridegroom often conversed with her, — the more so, indeed, because he desired her advice and assistance in a matter just then engaging his attention.

He had cultivated the acquaintance of the architect. On seeing his collection of works of art, he had taken occasion to talk much with him on history and on other matters, and especially from seeing the chapel had learned to appreciate his talent. The baron was young and wealthy. He was a collector: he wished to build. His love for the arts was keen, his knowledge slight. In the architect he thought that he had found the man he wanted, that with his assistance there was more than one aim at which he could arrive at once. He had spoken to his bride of what he wished. She praised him for it, and was infinitely delighted with the proposal. But it was more, perhaps, that she might withdraw this young man from Ottilie (with whom she fancied she saw that he was somewhat in love), than because she thought of applying his talents to any purpose. He had shown himself, indeed, very ready to help at any of her extemporised festivities, and had suggested various resources for this thing and that. But she always thought she understood better than he what should be done; and, as her inventive genius was usually somewhat common, her designs could be as well executed with the help of a clever *valet de chambre* as with that of the most finished artist. Further than to an altar on which something was to be offered, or to a crowning, whether of a living head or of one of plaster of Paris, the force of her imagination could not ascend, when a birthday, or other such occasion, made her wish to pay some one an especial compliment.

Ottilie was able to give the baron the most satis-

factory answer to his inquiries as to the position the architect held in their family. Charlotte had already, as she was aware, been exerting herself to find some situation for him: had it not been indeed for the arrival of the party, the young man would have left them immediately on the completion of the chapel, the winter having brought all building operations to a standstill; and it was, therefore, most fortunate if a new patron could be found to assist him, and to make use of his talents.

Ottilie's own intercourse with the architect was as pure and unconscious as possible. His agreeable presence and his industrious nature had charmed and entertained her, as the presence of an elder brother might. Her feelings for him remained at the calm, unimpassioned level of blood relationship: for in her heart there was no room for more, — it was filled to overflowing with love for Edward; only God, who interpenetrates all things, could share with him the possession of that heart.

Soon they were in the depth of winter: the weather grew wilder, the roads more impracticable; and therefore it seemed all the pleasanter to spend the waning days in agreeable society. With short intervals of ebb, the crowd from time to time flooded up over the house. Officers found their way there from distant garrison towns; the cultivated among them being a most welcome addition, the ruder the inconvenience of every one. Of civilians, too, there was no lack; and one day the count and the baroness quite unexpectedly came driving up together.

Their presence gave the castle the air of a genuine court. The men of rank and character formed a circle about the count, and the ladies yielded precedence to the baroness. The surprise at seeing both together, and in such high spirits, was not allowed to be of long continuance. There was a report that the count's wife

was dead, and the new marriage was to take place as soon as ever decency would allow it.

Well did Ottilie remember their first visit, and every word which was then uttered about marriage and separation, binding and dividing, hope, expectation, disappointment, renunciation. Here were these two persons, at that time without prospect for the future, now standing before her, so near their wished-for happiness; and an involuntary sigh escaped from her heart.

No sooner did Luciana hear that the count was an amateur of music, than at once she must get up something of a concert. She herself would sing, and accompany herself on the guitar. It was done. The instrument she did not play without skill; her voice was agreeable; as for the words, one understood about as little of them as one commonly does when a German beauty sings to the guitar. However, every one assured her that she had sung with exquisite expression; and she found quite enough approbation to satisfy her. A singular misfortune befell her, however, on this occasion. Among the party there happened to be a poet, whom she hoped particularly to attach to herself, wishing to induce him to write a song or two, and address them to her. This evening, therefore, she produced scarcely anything except songs of his composing. Like the rest of the party, he was perfectly courteous to her; but she had looked for more. She spoke to him several times, going as near the subject as she dared; but nothing further could she get. At last, unable to bear it any longer, she sent one of her train to him, to sound him, and find out whether he had not been delighted to hear his beautiful poems so beautifully executed.

"My poems?" he replied with amazement. "Pray excuse me, my dear sir," he added: "I heard nothing but the vowels, and not all of those; however, I am in

duty bound to express my gratitude for so amiable an intention." The dandy said nothing, and kept his secret: the other endeavoured to get himself out of the scrape by a few well-timed compliments. She did not conceal her desire to have something of his which should be written for herself.

If it would not have been too ill-natured, he might have handed her the alphabet, to imagine for herself, out of that, such laudatory poem as would please her, and set it to the first melody that came to hand; but she was not to escape out of this business without mortification. A short time after, she had to learn that the very same evening he had written to one of Ottilie's favourite melodies a most lovely poem, which was something more than complimentary.

Luciana, like all persons of her sort, who never can distinguish between where they show to advantage and where to disadvantage, now determined to try her fortune in reciting. Her memory was good: but, if the truth must be told, her execution was spiritless; and she was vehement without being passionate. She recited ballad stories, and whatever else is usually delivered in declamation. At the same time she had contracted an unhappy habit of accompanying what she recited with gestures, by which, in a disagreeable way, what is purely epic and lyric is more confused than connected with the dramatic.

The count, a keen-sighted man, soon saw through the party, — their inçlinations, dispositions, wishes, and capabilities, — and by some means or other contrived to bring Luciana to a new kind of exhibition, which was perfectly suited to her.

"I see here," he said, "a number of persons with fine figures, who would surely be able to imitate picturesque movements and postures. Suppose they were to try, if the thing is new to them, to represent some real and well-known picture. An imitation of this kind, if

it requires some labour in arrangement, has an inconceivably charming effect."

Luciana was quick enough in perceiving that here she was on her own ground entirely. Her fine shape, her well-rounded form, the regularity and yet expressiveness of her features, her light-brown braided hair, her long neck, — she ran them all over in her mind, and calculated on their pictorial effects; and if she had only known that her beauty showed to more advantage when she was still than when she was in motion, because in the last case certain ungracefulnesses continually escaped her, she would have entered even more eagerly than she did into this natural picture-making.

They brought forth some engravings of celebrated pictures, and the first which they chose was Van Dyck's "Belisarius." A large, well-proportioned man, somewhat advanced in years, was to represent the seated blind general. The architect was to be the affectionate soldier standing sorrowing before him, there really being some resemblance between them. Luciana, half from modesty, had chosen the part of the young woman in the background, counting out ample alms into the palm of his hand; while an old woman beside her is trying to prevent her, and representing that she is giving too much. Nor was another woman who is in the act of giving him something forgotten. Into this and other pictures they threw themselves with all earnestness. The count gave the architect a few hints as to the best style of arrangement; and he at once set up a kind of theatre, all necessary pains being taken for the proper lighting of it. They had already made many preparations, before they observed how large an outlay what they were undertaking would require, and that, in the country, in the middle of the winter, many things which they required, would be difficult to procure; consequently, to prevent a

stoppage, Luciana had nearly her whole wardrobe cut in pieces, to supply the various costumes which the original artist had arbitrarily selected.

The appointed evening came; and the exhibition was carried out in the presence of a large assemblage, and to the universal satisfaction. They had some good music to excite expectation, and the performance opened with the "Belisarius." The figures were so successful, the colours were so happily distributed, and the lighting managed so skilfully, that they might really have fancied themselves in another world; only that the presence of the real, instead of the apparent, produced a kind of uncomfortable sensation.

The curtain fell, and was more than once raised again by general desire. A musical interlude kept the assembly amused while preparation was going forward to surprise them with a picture of a higher stamp: it was the well-known design of Poussin, Ahasuerus and Esther. This time Luciana had done better for herself. As the fainting, sinking queen, she had put out all her charms; and, for the attendant maidens who were supporting her, she had cunningly selected pretty, well-shaped figures, not one among whom, however, had the slightest pretension to be compared with herself. From this picture, as from all the rest, Ottilie remained excluded. To sit on the golden throne, and represent the Zeus-like monarch, Luciana had picked out the finest and handsomest man of the party: so that this picture was really of incomparable perfection.

For a third they had taken the so-called "Father's Admonition" of Terburg; and who does not know Wille's admirable engraving of this picture? One foot thrown over the other, sits a noble, knightly-looking father: his daughter stands before him, to whose conscience he seems to be appealing. She, a fine, striking figure, in a folding drapery of white satin,

is only to be seen from behind; but her whole bearing appears to signify that she is collecting herself. That the admonition is not too severe, that she is not being utterly put to shame, is to be gathered from the air and attitude of the father; while the mother seems as if she were trying to conceal some slight embarrassment, — she is looking into a glass of wine, which she is on the point of drinking.

Here was an opportunity for Luciana to appear in her highest splendour. Her back hair, the form of her head, neck, and shoulders, were beautiful beyond all conception; and the waist, which in the modern antique of the ordinary dresses of young ladies is hardly visible, showed to the greatest advantage in all its graceful, slender elegance in the really old costume. The architect had contrived to dispose the rich folds of the white satin with the most artistic naturalness; and, without any question whatever, this living imitation far exceeded the original picture, and produced universal delight.

The spectators never ceased demanding a repetition of the performance; and the very natural wish to see the countenance of so lovely a creature, when they had done looking at her from behind, at last became so decided, that a merry, impatient young wit cried out aloud the words one is accustomed to write at the bottom of a page, "*Tournez, s'il vous plait*," which was echoed all round the room.

The performers, however, understood their advantage too well, and had mastered too completely the idea of these works of art, to yield to the most general clamour. The daughter remained standing in her shame, without favouring the spectators with the expression of her face; the father retained his attitude of admonition; and the mother continued with her nose and eyes in the transparent glass, in which, although she seemed to be drinking, the wine never diminished.

We need not describe the number of smaller afterpieces, for which had been chosen Flemish public-house scenes and fair and market days.

The count and the baroness departed, promising to return in the first happy weeks of their approaching union. And Charlotte now had hopes, after having endured two weary months of it, of ridding herself of the rest of the party at the same time. She was assured of her daughter's happiness, as soon as the first tumult of youth and betrothal should have subsided in her; for the bridegroom considered himself the most fortunate person in the world. His income was large, his disposition moderate and rational; and now he found himself further wonderfully favoured in the happiness of becoming the possessor of a young lady with whom all the world must be charmed. He had so peculiar a way of referring everything to her, and only to himself through her, that it gave him an unpleasant feeling when any newly arrived person did not devote himself heart and soul to her, and was far from flattered if — as occasionally happened, particularly with elderly men — he neglected her for a close intimacy with himself. Everything was settled about the architect. On New-Year's Day he was to follow him, and spend the carnival at his house in the city, where Luciana was promising herself infinite happiness from a repetition of her charmingly successful pictures, as well as from a hundred other things; all the more so as her aunt and bridegroom seemed to make so light of whatever expense was required for her amusements.

And now they were to break up. But this could not be managed in an ordinary way. They were one day making fun of Charlotte aloud, declaring that they would soon have eaten out her winter stores, when the nobleman who had represented Belisarius, being fortunately a man of some wealth, carried away

by Luciana's charms, to which he had been so long devoting himself, cried out unthinkingly, "Why not manage, then, in the Polish fashion? you come now and eat up me, and then we will go on round the circle." No sooner said than done. Luciana acceded. The next day they all packed up, and the swarm alighted on a new property. There indeed they found room enough, but few conveniences, and no preparations to receive them. Out of this arose many *contretemps*, which entirely enchanted Luciana: their life became ever wilder and wilder. Hunting-parties were set on foot in the deep snow, attended with every sort of disagreeableness; women were not allowed to excuse themselves any more than men: and so they trooped on, hunting and riding, sleighing and shouting, from one place to another, till at last they approached the Residence; and there the news of the day, and the scandals, and what else forms the amusement of people at courts and cities, gave the imagination another direction: and Luciana with her train of attendants (her aunt had gone on some time before) swept at once into a new sphere of life.

FROM OTTILIE'S DIARY.

"In the world we accept every person as such as he gives himself out, only he must give himself out for something. We can put up with the unpleasant more easily than we can endure the insignificant.

"Anything may be forced upon society except what involves a consequence.

"We never learn to know people when they come to us: we must go to them to find out how things stand with them.

"I find it almost natural that we should see many faults in visitors, and that directly they are gone we should judge them not in the most amiable manner.

For we have, so to say, a right to measure them by our own standard. Even cautious, sensible men can scarcely keep themselves in such cases from being sharp censors.

"When, on the contrary, we are staying at the houses of others, when we have seen them in the midst of all their habits and environments among those necessary conditions from which they cannot escape, when we have seen how they affect those about them, and how they adapt themselves to their circumstances, it is ignorance, it is worse, it is ill-will, to find ridiculous what in more than one sense has a claim on our respect.

"That which we call politeness and good breeding effects what otherwise can only be obtained by violence, or not even by that.

"Intercourse with women is the element of good manners.

"How can the character, the individuality, of a man coexist with polish of manner?

"Peculiarity of character can only be properly made prominent through good manners. Every one likes what has something in it, only it must not be a disagreeable something.

"In life generally, and in society, no one has such high advantages as a well-cultivated soldier.

"Rough soldiers do, at least, betray their character; and generally behind their strength there is a certain latent good humour, so that in difficulties it is possible to get on even with them.

"No one is more intolerable than an underbred civilian. From him one has a right to look for a delicacy, as he has no rough work to do.

"When we are living with people who have a delicate sense of propriety, we are made uneasy on their account when anything unbecoming is committed. So I always feel for and with Charlotte

when a person is rocking his chair. She cannot endure it.

"No one would ever come into a mixed party with spectacles on his nose, if he did but know that at once we women lose all pleasure in looking at him or listening to what he has to say.

"Familiarity, when displayed instead of reverency, is always ridiculous. No one would put his hat down when he had scarcely paid the ordinary compliments if he knew how comical it looks.

"There is no outward sign of courtesy that does not rest on a deep moral foundation. The proper education would be that which communicated the sign and the foundation of it at the same time.

"Behaviour is a mirror in which every one displays his own image.

"There is a courtesy of the heart. It is akin to love. Out of it arises the easiest courtesy in outward behaviour.

"A freely offered homage is the most beautiful of all relations. And how were that possible without love?

"We are never farther from our wishes than when we imagine that we possess what we have desired.

"No one is more a slave than the man who thinks himself free while he is not.

"The moment a man declares he is free, he feels the conditions to which he is subject. Let him venture to declare that he is subject to conditions, and he will feel that he is free.

"Against great advantages in another, there are no means of defending ourselves except love.

"There is something terrible in the sight of a highly gifted man lying under obligations to a fool.

"'No man is a hero to his valet,' the proverb says. But that is only because it requires a hero to recognise a hero. The valet will probably know how to value the valet-hero.

"Mediocrity has no greater consolation than in the thought that genius is not immortal.

"The greatest men are connected with their own century always through some weakness.

"One is apt to regard people as more dangerous than they are.

"Fools and modest people are alike innocuous. It is only your half-fools and your half-wise who are really and truly dangerous.

"There is no better deliverance from the world than through art; and a man can form no surer bond with it than through art.

"Alike in the moment of our highest fortune and our deepest necessity, we require the artist.

"The business of art is with the difficult and the good.

"To see the difficult easily handled, gives us the feeling of the impossible.

"Difficulties increase the nearer we are to our end.

"Sowing is not so difficult as reaping."

CHAPTER VI.

CHARLOTTE was in some way compensated for the very serious discomfort this visit had caused her through the fuller insight it had enabled her to gain into her daughter's character. In this, her knowledge of the world was of no slight service to her. It was not the first time that so singular a character had come across her, although she had never seen any in which the unusual features were so highly developed; and she had had experience enough to show her that such persons, after having felt the discipline of life, after having gone through something of it and been in intercourse with older people, may come out at last really charming and amiable: the selfishness may soften, and eager, restless activity find a definite direction for itself. And therefore, as a mother, Charlotte was able to endure the appearance of symptoms which for others might perhaps have been unpleasing, from a sense that where strangers only desire to enjoy, or at least not to have their taste offended, the business of parents is rather to hope.

After her daughter's departure, however, she had to be pained in a singular and unlooked-for manner, in finding that, not so much through what there really was objectionable in her behaviour, as through what was good and praiseworthy in it, she had left an ill report of herself behind her. Luciana seemed to have prescribed it as a rule to herself, not only to be merry with the merry, but miserable with the miserable, and, in order to give full exercise to her spirit of contradiction, often to make the happy uncomfortable, and the

sad cheerful. In every family among whom she came, she inquired after such members of it as were ill or infirm, and unable to appear in society. She would go to see them in their rooms, act the part of physician, and insist on prescribing powerful doses for them out of her own travelling medicine-chest, which she constantly took with her in her carriage; her attempts at curing, as may be supposed, either succeeding or failing as chance happened to direct.

In this sort of benevolence she was thoroughly cruel, and would listen to nothing that was said to her, because she was convinced that she was managing admirably. One such attempt, made on a mental sufferer, failed most disastrously; and this it was which gave Charlotte so much trouble, inasmuch as it involved consequences, and every one was talking about it. She never had heard of the story till Luciana was gone: Ottilie, who had made one of the party present at the time, had to give her a circumstantial account of it.

One of several daughters of a family of rank had the misfortune to have caused the death of one of her younger sisters: it had destroyed her peace of mind, and she had never been able to recover from the shock. She lived in her own room, occupying herself, and keeping quiet; and she could only bear to see the members of her own family when they came one by one. If there were several together, she suspected at once that they were making reflections upon her and her condition. To each of them singly she would speak rationally enough, and talk freely for an hour at a time.

Luciana had heard of this, and had secretly determined with herself, as soon as she got into the house, that she would, as it were, work a miracle, and restore the young lady to society. She conducted herself in the matter more prudently than usual, managed to introduce herself alone to the poor, sick-souled girl,

and, as far as people could understand, had wound her way into her confidence through music. At last came her fatal mistake: wishing to cause a sensation, and fancying she had sufficiently prepared her for it, one evening she suddenly introduced the beautiful, pale creature into the midst of the brilliant, glittering assembly; and perhaps even then the attempt might not have so utterly failed, had not the company, from curiosity and apprehension, conducted themselves so unwisely, first gathering about the invalid, and avoiding her, and, with their whispers, and shaking their heads together, confusing and agitating her. Her delicate sensibility could not endure it. With a dreadful shriek, which expressed, as it seemed, a horror at some monster that was rushing upon her, she fainted. The crowd fell back in terror on every side, Ottilie being one of those who brought the fainting girl to her room.

Luciana meanwhile, just like herself, had been reading an angry lecture to the rest of the party, without reflecting for a moment that she herself was entirely to blame, and without letting herself be deterred, by this and other failures, from going on with her experimentalising.

The state of the invalid herself had since that time become more and more serious: indeed, the disorder had increased to such a degree that the parents were unable to keep their poor child any longer at home, and had been forced to confide her to the care of a public institution. Nothing remained for Charlotte except, by the delicacy of her own attention to the family, in some degree to alleviate the pain which had been occasioned by her daughter. On Ottilie the event had made a deep impression. She felt the more for the unhappy girl, as she was convinced, not withholding her opinion from Charlotte, that, by a careful treatment, the disorder might have been unquestionably removed.

So there came, too, as it often happens that we dwell more on past disagreeables than on past agreeables, a slight misunderstanding to be spoken of, which had led Ottilie to a wrong judgment of the architect, when he did not choose to produce his collection that evening, although she had so eagerly begged him to produce it. This decided refusal had remained, ever since, hanging about her heart: she herself could not tell why. Her feelings about the matter were undoubtedly just: what a young lady like Ottilie could desire, a young man like the architect ought not to have refused. The latter, however, when she took occasion to give him a gentle reproof for it, had a pretty good plea to offer.

"If you knew," he said, "how roughly even cultivated people allow themselves to handle the most valuable works of art, you would forgive me for not producing mine among the crowd. No one will take the trouble to hold a medal by the rim. They will finger the most beautiful impressions and the smoothest surfaces: they will take the rarest coins between the thumb and forefinger, and rub them up and down, as if they were testing the execution with the touch. Without remembering that a large sheet of paper ought to be held in two hands, they will lay hold with one of an invaluable engraving of some irretrievable drawing, as a conceited politician lays hold of a newspaper, and passing judgment by anticipation, as he is cutting the pages, on the occurrences of the world. Nobody cares to recollect, that, if twenty people, one after the other, treat a work of art in this way, the one and twentieth will not find much to see there."

"Have not I often vexed you in this way?" asked Ottilie. "Have not I, through my carelessness, many times injured your treasures?"

"Never once," answered the architect, "never. For you it would be impossible. In you the right thing is innate."

"In any case," replied Ottilie, "it would not be a bad plan, if, in the next edition of the book on good manners, after the chapters which tell us how we ought to eat and drink in company, an exhaustive chapter were inserted, how to behave among works of art and in museums."

"Undoubtedly," said the architect; "and then curiosity-collectors and amateurs would be better contented to show their valuable treasures to the world."

Ottilie had long, long forgiven him; but as he seemed to have taken her reproof sorely to heart, and assured her again and again that he would gladly produce everything, that he was delighted to do anything for his friends, she felt that she had wounded his feelings, and that she owed him some compensation. It was not easy for her, therefore, to give an absolute refusal to a request which he made her in the conclusion of this conversation; although, when she called her heart into council about it, she did not see how she could allow herself to do what he wished.

The circumstances of the matter were these: that Ottilie had been excluded from the picture-exhibition through Luciana's jealousy had irritated him in the highest degree; and at the same time he had observed with regret that Charlotte had been prevented by sickness from being often present at this, the most brilliant part of all the amusements; and now he did not wish to go away without some additional proof of his gratitude, and, for the honour of one and the entertainment of the other, preparing a far more beautiful exhibition than any of those which had preceded it. Perhaps, too, unknown to himself, another secret motive was working on him. It was so hard for him to leave the house and to leave the family. It seemed impossible to him to part from Ottilie's eyes, under the calm, sweet, gentle glances of which he had, the latter part of the time, been living almost entirely.

The Christmas holidays were approaching; and it became at once clear to him that the very thing which he wanted was a representation, with real figures, of one of those pictures of the scene in the stable, — a sacred exhibition such as at this holy season good Christians delight to offer to the divine mother and her child, of the manner in which she, in her seeming lowliness, was honoured first by the shepherds and afterward by kings.

He had formed a perfect conception how such a picture might be contrived. A handsome and blooming boy was found, and there would be no lack of shepherds and shepherdesses. But without Ottilie the thing could not be done. The young man had exalted her, in his design, to be the Mother of God; and, if she refused, there was no question but the undertaking must fall to the ground. Ottilie, half embarrassed at the proposal, referred him and his request to Charlotte. The latter gladly gave her permission, and lent her assistance in overcoming and overpersuading Ottilie's hesitation in assuming so sacred a personality. The architect worked day and night, that by Christmas Eve everything might be ready.

Day and night, indeed, in the literal sense. At all times he was a man who had but few necessities, and Ottilie's presence seemed to be to him in the place of all delicacies. When he was working for her, it was as if he required no sleep; when he was busy about her, as if he could do without food. Accordingly, by the hour of the evening solemnity, all was completed. He had found the means of collecting some well-toned wind instruments, to form an introduction, and produce the desired disposition. But, when the curtain rose, Charlotte was taken completely by surprise. The picture which presented itself to her had been repeated so often in the world, that one could scarcely have expected any new impression to be produced. But here

the reality, as representing the picture, had its especial advantages. The whole space was the colour rather of night than of twilight; and there was nothing, even of the details of the scene, which was obscure. The inimitable idea that all the light should proceed from the child, the artist had contrived to carry out by an ingenious method of illumination, which was concealed by the figures in the foreground, who were all in shadow. Merry boys and girls were standing round, their rosy faces sharply lighted from below; and there were angels, too, whose own brilliancy grew pale before the divine, whose ethereal bodies showed dim and dense, and needing other light in the presence of the body of the divine humanity. By good fortune the infant had fallen asleep in the loveliest attitude; so that nothing disturbed the contemplation when the eye rested on the seeming mother, who with infinite grace had lifted off a veil to reveal her hidden treasure. At this moment the picture seemed to have been caught, and there to have remained fixed. Physically dazzled, mentally surprised, the people round appeared to have just moved to turn away their half-blinded eyes, to be glancing again toward the child with curious delight, and to be showing more wonder and pleasure than awe and reverence, — although these emotions were not forgotten, and were to be traced upon the features of some of the older spectators.

But Ottilie's figure, expression, attitude, glance, excelled all that any painter has ever represented. A man possessed of true knowledge of art, could he have seen this spectacle, would have been in fear lest any portion of it should move: he would have doubted whether anything could ever so much please him again. Unluckily there was no one present who could comprehend the whole of this effect. The architect alone, who, as a tall, slender shepherd, was looking in from the side over those who were kneeling, enjoyed, al-

though he was not in the best position for seeing, the fullest pleasure. And who can describe the mien of the new-made queen of heaven? The purest humility, the most exquisite feeling of modesty, while having undeservedly bestowed upon her a great honour, an indescribable and immeasurable happiness was displayed upon her features, expressing as much her own emotion as that of the character which she was endeavouring to represent.

Charlotte was delighted with the beautiful figures, but what had most effect on her was the child. Her eyes filled with tears; and her imagination presented to her, in the liveliest colours, that she might soon hope to have such another darling creature on her own lap.

They had let down the curtain, partly to give the exhibitors some little rest, partly to make an alteration in the exhibition. The artist had proposed to himself to transmute the first scene of night and lowliness into a picture of splendour and glory, and for this purpose had prepared a blaze of light to fall in from every side, which this interval was required to kindle.

Ottilie, in the semi-theatrical position in which she found herself, had hitherto felt perfectly at her ease; because, with the exception of Charlotte and a few members of the household, no one had witnessed this pious piece of artistic display. She was, therefore, in some degree annoyed, when, in the interval, she learned that a stranger had come into the saloon, and had been warmly received by Charlotte. Who it was, no one was able to tell her. She resigned herself, in order not to produce a disturbance, and to go on with her character. Candles and lamps blazed out, and she was surrounded by splendour perfectly infinite. The curtain rose. It was a sight to startle the spectators. The whole picture was one blaze of light; and, instead of the full depth of shadow, there now were only

the colours left remaining, which, from the skill with which they had been selected, produced a gentle softening of tone. Looking out under her long eyelashes, Ottilie perceived the figure of a man sitting by Charlotte. She did not recognise him, but the voice she fancied was that of the assistant at the school. A singular emotion came over her. How many things had happened since she last heard the voice of her kind instructor! Like forked lightning the stream of her joys and her sorrow flashed through her soul; and the question rose in her heart, "Dare you confess, dare you acknowledge, it all to him? If not, how little can you deserve to appear before him under this sainted form! And how strange must it not seem to him, who has only known you as your natural self, to see you now under this disguise!" In an instant, swift as thought, feeling and reflection began to clash and gain within her. Her eyes filled with tears, while she forced herself to continue to appear as a rigid figure; and it was a relief indeed to her when the child began to stir, and the artist saw himself compelled to give the sign for the curtain to fall again.

If the painful feeling of being unable to meet a valued friend had, during the last few moments, been distressing Ottilie, in addition to her other emotions, she was now in still greater embarrassment. Was she to present herself to him in this strange disguise, or had she better change her dress? She did not hesitate: she did the latter, and in the interval she endeavoured to collect and to compose herself; nor did she properly recover her self-possession, until at last, in her ordinary costume, she had welcomed the new visitor.

CHAPTER VII.

In so far as the architect desired the happiness of his kind patronesses, it was a pleasure to him, now that at last he was obliged to go, to know that he was leaving them in good society with the estimable assistant. At the same time, however, when he thought of their goodness in its relation to himself, he could not help feeling it a little painful to see his place so soon, and, as it seemed to his modesty, so well, so completely, supplied. He had lingered and lingered, but now he forced himself away: what, after he was gone, he must endure as he could, at least he could not stay to witness with his own eyes.

To the great relief of this half-melancholy feeling, the ladies at his departure made him a present of a waistcoat, on which he had watched them both for some time past at work, with a silent envy of the fortunate man, as yet unknown to him, to whom it might one day belong. Such a present is the most agreeable which a true-hearted man can receive; for, while he thinks of the unwearied play of the beautiful fingers at the making of it, he cannot help flattering himself that in so long-sustained a labour the feeling could not have remained utterly without an interest in its accomplishment.

The ladies had now a new visitor to entertain, for whom they felt a real regard, and whose stay with them it would be their endeavour to make as agreeable as they could. There is in all women a peculiar circle of inward interests, which remain always the same, and from

which nothing in the world can divorce them. In outward social intercourse, on the other hand, they will gladly and easily allow themselves to take their tone from the person with whom at the moment they are occupied; and thus, by a mixture of impassiveness and susceptibility, by persisting and by yielding, they continue to keep the government to themselves: and no man of good behaviour can ever take it from them.

The architect, following at the same time his own fancy and his own inclination, had been exerting himself and putting out his talents for their gratification and for the purposes of his friends; and business and amusement, while he was with them, had been conducted in this spirit, and directed to the ends which most suited his taste. But now in a short time, through the presence of the assistant, quite another sort of life was commenced. His great gift was to talk well, and to treat, in his conversation, of men and human relations, particularly in reference to the cultivation of young people. Thus arose a very perceptible contrast to the life which had been going on hitherto, all the more as the assistant could not entirely approve of their having interested themselves in such subjects so exclusively.

Of the impersonated picture which received him on his arrival, he never said a single word. On the other hand, when they took him to see the church and the chapel with their new decorations, expecting that it would please him as much as they were pleased with it themselves, he did not refrain from expressing his opinion.

"This mixing up of the holy with the sensuous," he said, "is anything but pleasing to my taste: I cannot like men to set apart certain especial places, consecrate them, and deck them out, that by so doing they may nourish in themselves a temper of piety. No surroundings, not even the most common, must disturb in us

that sense of the divine which accompanies us wherever we are, and can consecrate every spot into a temple. What pleases me is, to see a home service of God held in the saloon where people come together to eat, where they have their parties, and amuse themselves with games and dances. What is highest, the most excellent in men, has no form; and one should be cautious how one gives it any form except noble action."

Charlotte, who was already generally acquainted with his mode of thinking, and, in the short time he had been at the castle, had already probed it more deeply, found something also which he might do for her in his own department; and she had her garden children, whom the architect had reviewed shortly before his departure, marshalled up into the great saloon. In their clean, bright uniforms, with their regular movement, and their own natural vivacity, they looked exceedingly well. The assistant examined them in his own way, and by a variety of questions, and by the turns he gave them, soon brought to light the capacities and dispositions of the children; and, without it seeming so, in the space of less than one hour he had really given them important instruction and assistance.

"How did you manage that?" said Charlotte, as the children marched away. "I listened with all my attention. Nothing was brought forward except things which were quite familiar; and yet I cannot tell the least how I should begin, to bring them to be discussed in so short a time so methodically, with all this questioning and answering."

"Perhaps," replied the assistant, "we ought to make a secret of the tricks of our own handicraft. However, I will not hide from you one very simple maxim, with the help of which you may do this, and a great deal more than this. Take any subject, a substance, an

idea, whatever you like, keep fast hold of it, make yourself thoroughly acquainted with it in all its parts; and then it will be easy for you, in conversation, to find out, with a mass of children, how much about it has already developed itself in them; what requires to be stimulated, what to be directly communicated. The answers to your questions may be as unsatisfactory as they will, they may wander wide of the mark: if you only take care that your counter-question shall draw their thoughts and senses inward again, if you do not allow yourself to be driven from your own position, the children will at last reflect, comprehend, learn only what the teacher desires them to learn; and the subject will be presented to them in the light in which he wishes them to see it. The greatest mistake which he can make is, to allow himself to be run away with from the subject, not to know how to keep fast to the point with which he is engaged. Try it the next time the children come: you will find you will be greatly entertained by it yourself."

"That is very pretty," said Charlotte. "The right method of teaching is the reverse, I see, of what we must do in life. In society we must keep the attention long upon nothing; and in instruction the first commandment is, to permit no dissipation of it."

"Variety, without dissipation, were the best motto for both teaching and life, if it were easy to preserve this desirable equipoise," said the assistant; and he was going on farther with the subject, when Charlotte desired him to look again at the children, whose merry band was at the moment moving across the court. He expressed his satisfaction at seeing them wearing a uniform. "Men," he said, "should wear a uniform from their childhood upward. They have to accustom themselves to work together; to lose themselves among their equals; to obey in masses, and to work on a large scale. Every kind of uniform, moreover, generates a

military habit of thought, and a smart, straightforward carriage. All boys are born soldiers, whatever you do with them. You have only to watch them at their mock fights and games, their storming-parties and scaling-parties."

"On the other hand, you will not blame me," replied Ottilie, "if I do not insist with my girls on such unity of costume. When I introduce them to you, I hope to gratify you by a party-coloured mixture."

"I approve of that entirely," replied the other. "Women should go about in every sort of variety of dress; each following her own style and her own likings, that each may learn to feel what sits well upon her, and becomes her. And for a more weighty reason as well, — because it is appointed for them to stand alone all their lives, and work alone."

"That seems to me to be a paradox," answered Charlotte. "Are we, then, to be never anything for ourselves?"

"Oh, yes!" replied the assistant. "In respect of other women assuredly. But observe a young lady as a lover, as a bride, as a housewife, as a mother. She always stands isolated. She is always alone, and will be alone. Even the most empty-headed woman is in the same case. Each one of them excludes all others. It is her nature to do so, because of each one of them is required everything which the entire sex have to do. With a man it is altogether different. He would make a second man if there were none. But a woman might live to all eternity, without even so much as thinking of producing a duplicate of herself."

"One has only to say the truth in a strange way," said Charlotte, "and at last the strangest thing will seem to be true. We will select what is good for us out of your observations; and yet as women we will stick to women, and do common work with them too, not to give the other sex too great an advantage over

us. Indeed, you must not take it ill of us, if in future we come to feel a little malicious satisfaction when our lords and masters do not get on in the very best way together."

With much care, this wise, sensible person went on to examine more closely how Ottilie proceeded with her little pupils, and expressed his decided approbation of it. "You are quite right," he said, "in directing these children only to what they can immediately and usefully put in practice. Cleanliness, for instance, will accustom them to wear their clothes with pleasure to themselves; and everything is gained if they can be induced to enter into what they do with cheerfulness and self-reflection."

In other ways he found, to his great satisfaction, that nothing had been done for outward display, but all was inward, and designed to supply what was indispensably necessary. "In how few words," he cried, "might the whole business of education be summed up, if people had but ears to hear!"

"Will you try whether I have?" said Ottilie, smiling.

"Indeed I will," answered he, "only you must not betray me. Educate the boys to be servants, and the girls to be mothers; and everything is as it should be."

"To be mothers?" replied Ottilie. "Women would scarcely think that sufficient. They have to look forward, without being mothers, to going out into service. And, indeed, our young men think themselves a great deal too good for servants. One can see easily in every one of them that he holds himself more fit to be a master."

"And for that reason we should say nothing about it to them," said the assistant. "We insinuate ourselves into life, but life is not insinuating to us. How many men would like to acknowledge at the outset what at the end they must acknowledge whether they

like it or not? But let us leave these considerations, which do not concern us here.

"I consider you very fortunate in having been able to go so methodically to work with your pupils. If your youngest girls run about with their dolls, and stitch together a few petticoats for them; if the elder sisters will then take care of the younger, and the whole household know how to supply its own wants, and one member of it help the others, — the further step into life will not then be great; and such a girl will find in her husband what she has lost in her parents.

"But, among the higher ranks, the problem is a sorely intricate one. We have to provide for higher, finer, more delicate relations, especially for such as arise out of society. We are, therefore, obliged to give our pupils an outward cultivation. It is indispensable, it is necessary; and it may be really valuable, if we keep within bounds. Only it is so easy, while one is proposing to cultivate the children for a wider circle, to drive them out into the indefinite, without keeping before our eyes the real requisites of the inner nature. Here lies the problem which is more or less solved by some educators, others failing to do so.

"Many things, with which we furnish our scholars at the school, do not please me; because experience tells me of how little service they are likely to be in after-life. It is impossible to state how much is at once stripped off, how much at once committed to oblivion, as soon as the young lady finds herself in the position of a housewife or a mother.

"In the meantime, since I have devoted myself to this occupation, I cannot but entertain a devout hope that one day, with the companionship of some faithful helpmate, I may succeed in cultivating purely in my pupils that, and that only, which they will require when they pass out into the field of independent activity and self-reliance; that I may be able to say to

myself, in this sense is their education completed. Another education there is indeed which will again speedily recommence, and work on well-nigh through all the years of our life, — the education which circumstances will give us, if we do not give it to ourselves."

"How true are these words!" thought Ottilie. What a great deal of passion, little dreamed of before, had done to educate her in the past year! What trials she saw hover before her if she looked forward only to what the immediate future had in store for her!

It was not without a purpose that the young man had spoken of a helpmate, — of a wife; for, with all his diffidence, he could not refrain from thus remotely hinting at his own wishes. A number of circumstances and accidents, indeed, combined to induce him on this visit to approach a few steps toward his aim.

The lady superior of the school was advanced in years. She had been already for some time looking about among her fellow labourers, male and female, for some person whom she could take into partnership with herself, and at last had made proposals to the assistant, in whom she had the highest ground for feeling confidence. He was to conduct the business of the school with herself. He was to work, together with her, as if it were his own, and after her death, as her heir, to enter upon it as sole proprietor.

The principal thing now seemed to be, that he should find a wife who would coöperate with him. Ottilie was secretly before his eyes and before his heart. A number of difficulties suggested themselves, and yet there were favourable circumstances on the other side to counterbalance them. Luciana had left the school: Ottilie could therefore return with the less difficulty. Of the relation in which she stood to Edward, some little had transpired. It passed, however, as many such things do, as a matter of indifference; and this

very circumstance might make it desirable that she should leave the castle. And yet, perhaps, no decision would have been arrived at, no step would have been taken, had not an unexpected visit given a special impulse to his hesitation. The presence, in any and every circle, of people of mark, can never be without its effects.

The count and the baroness, who often found themselves asked for their opinion — almost every one being in difficulty about the education of their children — as to the value of the various schools, had found it desirable to make themselves particularly acquainted with this one, which was generally so well spoken of; and, under their present circumstances, they were more easily able to carry on these inquiries in company.

The baroness, however, had something else in view as well. While she was last at the castle, she had talked over with Charlotte the whole affair of Edward and Ottilie. She had insisted again and again that Ottilie must be sent away. She tried every means to encourage Charlotte to do it, and to keep her from being frightened by Edward's threats. Several modes of escape from the difficulty were suggested. Accidentally the school was mentioned, and the assistant and his incipient passion, which made the baroness more resolved than ever to pay her intended visit there.

She went: she made acquaintances with the assistant, looked over the establishment, and spoke of Ottilie. The count also spoke with much interest of her, having in his recent visit learned to know her better. She had approached him: indeed, she had felt attracted by him, believing that she could see, that she could perceive, in his solid, substantial conversation, something to which hitherto she had been an entire stranger. In her intercourse with Edward, the world had been utterly forgotten: in the presence of the count, the world appeared first worth regarding. The

attraction was mutual. The count conceived a liking for Ottilie: he would have been glad to have had her for a daughter. Thus, a second time, and worse than the first time, she was in the way of the baroness. Who knows what, in times when passions ran hotter than they do nowadays, this lady might not have devised against her? Now she would have been satisfied if she could get her married, and render her more innocuous for the future to the peace of mind of married women. She therefore artfully urged the assistant, in a delicate, but effective manner, to set out on a little excursion to the castle, where his plans and his wishes, of which he made no secret to the lady, he might forthwith take steps to realise.

With the fullest consent of the superior he started off on his expedition, and in his heart he cherished much hopes of success. He knew that Ottilie was not ill-disposed toward him; and although it was true there was some disproportion of rank between them, yet distinctions of this kind were fast disappearing in the temper of the time. Moreover, the baroness had made him perceive clearly that Ottilie must always remain a poor, portionless maiden. To be related to a wealthy family, it was said, could be of service to nobody. For, even with the largest property, men have a feeling that it is not right to deprive of any considerable sum those who, as standing in a nearer degree of relationship, appear to have a fuller right to possession; and really it is a strange thing, that the immense privilege which a man has of disposing of his property after his death, he so very seldom uses for the benefit of those whom he loves, out of regard to established usage only appearing to consider those who would inherit his estate from him supposing he made no will at all.

Thus, while on his journey, he began to feel himself entirely on a level with Ottilie. A favourable reception raised his hopes. He found Ottilie indeed not

altogether so open with him as usual; but she was considerably matured, more developed, and, if you please, generally more conversable than he had known her. She was ready to give him the fullest insight into many things in any way connected with his profession; but, when he attempted to approach his aim, a certain inward shyness always held him back.

Once, however, Charlotte gave him an opportunity for saying something. In Ottilie's presence she said to him, "Well, now, you have looked closely enough into everything which is going forward in my circle. How do you find Ottilie? you had better say while she is here."

Hereupon the assistant signified, with a clear perception and composed expression, that, in respect of a freer carriage, of an easier manner in speaking, of a higher insight into the things of the world, which showed itself more in actions than in words, he found Ottilie much improved; but that he still believed it might be of serious advantage to her if she would go back for some little time to the school, in order methodically and thoroughly to make her own for ever what the world was only imparting to her in fragments and pieces, rather perplexing her than satisfying her, and often too late to be of service. He did not wish to be prolix about it. Ottilie herself knew best how much method and connection there was in the style of instruction out of which, in that case, she would be taken.

Ottilie could not deny this, but could not avow what these words made her feel, because she was hardly able to give an account of it to herself. It seemed to her as if nothing in the world was disconnected so long as she thought of the one person whom she loved; and she could not conceive how, without him, anything could be connected at all.

Charlotte replied to the proposal kindly and cau-

tiously. She said that she herself, as well as Ottilie, had long desired her return to the school. At that time, however, the presence of so dear a companion and helper had become indispensable to herself; still she would offer no obstacle at some future period, if Ottilie continued to wish it, to her going back there for such a time as would enable her to complete what she had begun, and to make entirely her own what had been interrupted.

The assistant listened with delight to this qualified assent. Ottilie did not venture to object, although the very thought made her shudder. Charlotte, on her hand, only thought of gaining time. She hoped that Edward would soon come back and find himself a happy father; then she was convinced all would go right, and one way or another they would be able to settle something for Ottilie.

After an important conversation furnishing matter for reflection to all who have taken part in it, there commonly follows a sort of pause, which in appearance is like a general embarrassment. They walked up and down in the room. The assistant turned over the leaves of various books, and came at last on the folio of engravings which had remained lying there since Luciana's time. As soon as he saw that it contained nothing but apes, he shut it up again.

It may have been this, however, which gave occasion to a conversation of which we find traces in Ottilie's diary.

FROM OTTILIE'S DIARY.

"It is strange how men can have the heart to take such pains with the pictures of those hideous monkeys. One lowers one's self sufficiently when one looks at them merely as animals, but it is really wicked to give way to the inclination to look for people whom we know behind such masks."

"It is a sure mark of a certain perverseness to take pleasure in caricatures and monstrous faces and pygmies. I have to thank our kind assistant that I have never been tormented with natural history: I could never make myself at home with worms and beetles."

"Just now he acknowledged to me, that it was the same with him. 'Of nature,' he said, 'we ought to know nothing except what is actually alive immediately around us. With the trees which blossom and put out leaves and bear fruit in our own neighbourhood, with every shrub we pass by, with every blade of grass on which we tread, we stand in a real relation. They are our genuine compatriots. The birds which hop up and down among our branches, which sing among our leaves, belong to us: they speak to us from our childhood upwards, and we learn to understand their language. But let a man ask himself whether or not every strange creature, torn out of its natural environment, does not at first sight make a sort of painful impression upon him, which is only deadened by custom. It is a mark of a motley, dissipated sort of life, to be able to endure monkeys and parrots and black people about one's self.'"

"Sometimes, when a certain longing curiosity about these strange objects has come over me, I have envied the traveller who sees such marvels in living, everyday connection with other marvels. But he, too, must have become another man. Palm-trees will not allow a man to wander among them with impunity, and doubtless his tone of thinking becomes very different in a land where elephants and tigers are at home."

"Only such inquirers into nature deserve our respect, as know how to describe and represent to us

the strange, wonderful things they have seen together with their own locality, each in its own especial element. How I should enjoy once hearing Humboldt talk!"

"A cabinet of natural curiosities we may regard like an Egyptian burying-place, where the various plant-gods and animal-gods stand about embalmed. It may be well enough for a priest caste to busy itself with such things in a twilight of mystery: but, in general instruction, they have no place or business; and we must beware of them all the more, because what is nearer to us, and more valuable, may be so easily thrust aside by them."

"A teacher who can arouse a feeling for one single good action, for one single good poem, accomplishes more than he who fills our memory with rows on rows of natural objects, classified with name and form. For what is the result of all these, except what we know as well without them, that the human form preëminently and solely is made in the image and likeness of God?"

"Individuals may be left to occupy themselves with whatever amuses them, with whatever gives them pleasure, whatever they think useful; but the proper study of mankind is man."

CHAPTER VIII.

THERE are but few men who care to occupy themselves with the immediate past. Either we are forcibly bound up in the present, or we lose ourselves in the long gone by, and seek back for what is utterly lost, as if it were possible to summon it up again, and rehabilitate it. Even in great and wealthy families who are under many obligations to their ancestors, we commonly find men remembering their grandfathers more than their fathers.

Such reflections as these suggested themselves to our assistant, as, on one of those beautiful days in which the departing winter is accustomed to imitate the spring, he had been walking up and down the great old castle garden, and admiring the tall avenues of the lindens, and the formal walks and flower-beds which had been laid out by Edward's father. The trees had thriven admirably, according to the design of him who had planted them; and now, when they ought to have begun to be valued and enjoyed, no one ever spoke of them. Hardly any one even went near them; and the interest and the outlay were now directed to the other side, out into the free and the open.

He made some remarks about it to Charlotte on his return: she did not take it unkindly. "While life is sweeping us onward," she replied, "we fancy that we are acting out our own impulses: we believe that we choose ourselves what we wish to do, and what we wish to enjoy. But, in fact, if we look at it

closely, our actions are no more than the plans and the desires of the time which we are compelled to carry on."

"No doubt," said the assistant. "And who is strong enough to withstand the stream of what is round him? Time passes on, carrying away with it opinions, thoughts, prejudices, and interests. If the youth of the son falls in the era of revolution, we may feel assured that he will have nothing in common with his father. If the father lived at a time when the desire was to accumulate property, to secure the possession of it, to narrow and to gather one's self in, and to base one's enjoyment in separation from the world, the son will at once seek to extend his sphere, to communicate himself to others, to spread himself over a wide surface, and open out his closed stores."

"Entire periods," replied Charlotte, "resemble this father and son whom you have been describing. Of the state of things when every little town was obliged to have its walls and moats, when the castle of the nobleman was built in a swamp, and the smallest manor-houses were only accessible by a drawbridge, we are scarcely able to form a conception. In our days, large cities take down their walls; the moats of the princes' castles are filled in; cities are nothing else than large hamlets; and, when one travels and sees all this, he might fancy that universal peace has been established, and that the golden age was at hand. No one feels himself easy in a garden which does not look like the open country. There must be nothing to remind him of form and constraint: we choose to be entirely free, and to draw a breath without sense of confinement. Do you conceive it possible, my friend, that we can ever return again out of this into another, into our former, condition?"

"Why not?" replied the assistant. "Every condition has its burden, the most relaxed as well as the

most constrained. The former presupposes abundance, and leads to extravagance. Let want reappear, and the spirit of moderation is at once with us again. Men who are obliged to make use of their space and their soil, will speedily enough raise walls up round their gardens to be sure of their crops and plants. Out of this will arise by degrees a new phase of things: the useful will again gain the upper hand, and even the man of large possessions will feel at last that he must make the most of all that belongs to him. Believe me, it is quite possible that your son may become indifferent to all which you have been doing in the park, and draw in again behind the solemn walls and the tall lindens of his grandfather."

The secret pleasure it gave Charlotte to have a son foretold to her, made her forgive the assistant his somewhat unfriendly prophecy as to how her lovely, beautiful park might one day fare. She therefore answered without any discomposure, "You and I are not old enough yet to have lived through very much of these contradictions; and yet when I recall my early youth, when I remember the complaints I used to hear from older people, and when I think at the same time of what the country and the town then were, I have nothing to advance against what you say. But is there nothing which one can do to remedy this natural course of things? Are father and son, parents and children, to be always thus unable to understand each other? You have been so kind as to prophesy a boy to me. Is it necessary that he must stand in contradiction to his father? Must he destroy what his parents have erected, instead of completing it, instead of following up the same idea and elevating it?"

"There is a rational remedy for it," replied the assistant, "but it is only seldom put in practice. The father should raise his son to a joint ownership with himself. He should permit him to plant and to build,

and allow him the same innocent liberty which he allows to himself. One form of activity may be woven into another, but it cannot be pieced on to it. A young shoot may be readily and easily grafted with an old stem, to which no grown branch admits of being fastened."

The assistant was glad to have had the opportunity, at the moment when he saw himself obliged to take his leave, of having said something agreeable to Charlotte, and thus secure her favour afresh. He had been already too long absent from home; and yet he could not make up his mind to return there, until after a full conviction that he must allow the approaching epoch of Charlotte's confinement first to pass by, before he could look for any decision from her in respect to Ottilie. He therefore accommodated himself to the circumstances, and returned to the superior with these prospects and hopes.

Charlotte's confinement was now approaching: she kept more in her own room. The ladies who had gathered about her were her closest companions. Ottilie managed all domestic matters, hardly able, however, the while, to think of what she was doing. She had indeed utterly resigned herself: she desired to continue to exert herself to the extent of her power for Charlotte, for the child, for Edward. But she could not see how it would be possible for her. Nothing could save her from utter distraction, except to do the duty each day brought with it.

A son was brought happily into the world; and the ladies declared, with one voice, it was the very image of its father. Only Ottilie, as she wished the new mother joy, and kissed the child with all her heart, was unable to see the likeness. Once already Charlotte had felt most painfully the absence of her husband, when she had to make preparations for her daughter's marriage. And now the father could not

be present at the birth of his son. He could not have the choosing of the name by which the child was hereafter to be called.

The first among all Charlotte's friends who came to wish her joy was Mittler. He had placed expresses ready to bring him news the instant the event took place. He made his appearance, and was scarcely able to conceal his triumph, even before Ottilie; when alone with Charlotte, he gave utterance to it, and was at once ready with means to remove all anxieties, and set aside all immediate difficulties. The baptism should not be delayed a day longer than necessary. The old clergyman, who had one foot already in the grave, should leave his blessing, to bind together the past and the future. The child was to be called Otto; what name could he bear so fitly as that of his father and of his father's friend?

It required the peremptory resolution of this man to set aside the innumerable considerations, arguments, hesitations, difficulties; what this person knew, and that person knew better; the opinions, up and down, and backwards and forwards, which every friend volunteered. It always happens on such occasions, that, when one inconvenience is removed, a new one seems to arise; and, in wishing to spare all sides, we inevitably go wrong on one side or the other.

The letters to friends and relations were all undertaken by Mittler, and they were to be written and sent off at once. It was highly necessary, he thought, that the good fortune, which he considered so important for the family, should be known as widely as possible through the ill-natured and misinterpreting world. For, indeed, these late entanglements and perplexities had got abroad; people, at all times, holding the conviction that whatever happens, happens only in order that they may have something to talk about.

The ceremony of the baptism was to be observed

with all due honour, but it was to be as brief and as private as possible. The people came together: Ottilie and Mittler were to hold the child as sponsors. The old pastor, supported by the servants of the church, came in with slow steps: the prayers were offered. The boy lay in Ottilie's arms: and, as she was looking affectionately down at him, he opened his eyes; and she was not a little startled when she seemed to see her own eyes looking at her. The likeness would have surprised any one. Mittler, who next had to receive the child, started as well; he fancying he saw in the little features a most striking likeness to the captain. He had never seen a resemblance so marked.

The infirmity of the good old clergyman had not permitted him to accompany the ceremony with more than the usual liturgy.

Mittler, however, who was full of his subject, remembered his former performances when he had been in the ministry; and indeed, it was one of his peculiarities, that, on every sort of occasion, he always thought what he would like to say, and what expressions he would use.

At this time he was the less able to contain himself, as he was now in the midst of a circle consisting entirely of well-known friends. He began, therefore, toward the conclusion of the service, to put himself quietly into the place of the clergyman; in a funny manner to speak of his duties and hopes as godfather, and to dwell all the longer on the subject, as he thought he saw, in Charlotte's gratified look, that she was pleased with his doing so.

It altogether escaped the eagerness of the orator, that the good old man would gladly have sat down; still less did he think that he was on the way to occasion a more serious evil. After he had emphatically dwelt upon the relation in which every person present stood toward the child, thereby putting Ottilie's com-

posure sorely to the proof, he turned at last to the old man with the words, "And you, my worthy father, you may now well say with Simeon, 'Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace; for mine eyes have seen the saviour of this house.'"

He was now in full swing toward a brilliant peroration, when he perceived the old man, to whom he held out the child, first appear a little to incline toward it, and immediately after to totter and sink backward. Hardly prevented from falling, he was lifted to a seat; but, notwithstanding the instant assistance which was rendered, he was found to be dead.

To see thus side by side birth and death, the coffin and the cradle, to see them and to realise them, to comprehend, not with the eye of imagination, but with the bodily eye, at one moment these fearful opposites, was a hard trial to the spectators; the harder, the more utterly it had taken them by surprise. Ottilie alone stood contemplating the slumberer, whose features still retained their gentle, sweet expression, with a kind of envy. The life of her soul was extinct: why should the bodily life any longer drag on in weariness?

But though Ottilie was frequently led by melancholy incidents which occurred in the day, to think of the past, of separation and of loss, at night she had strange visions given her to comfort her, which assured her of the existence of her beloved, and thus gave her strength for her own life. When she laid herself down at night to rest, and was floating among sweet sensations between sleep and waking, she seemed to be looking into a clear but softly illuminated space. In this she would see Edward with the greatest distinctness, and not in the dress in which she had been accustomed to see him, but in military uniform; never in the same position, but always in a natural one, and with nothing fantastic about him, either standing or walking, or lying or riding. The figure, which was

painted with the utmost minuteness, moved readily before her without any effort of hers, without her willing it or exerting her imagination to produce it. Frequently she saw him surrounded with something in motion, which was darker than the bright ground; but the figures were shadowy, and she could scarcely distinguish them,— sometimes they were like men, sometimes they were like horses, or like trees, or like mountains. She usually went to sleep in the midst of the apparition; and when, after a quiet night, she woke again in the morning, she felt refreshed and comforted: she could say to herself, "Edward still lives;" and she herself was still remaining in the closest relation toward him.

CHAPTER IX.

SPRING had come: it was late, but it therefore burst out more rapidly and more exhilaratingly than usual. Ottilie now found in the garden the fruits of her carefulness. Everything was germinating, and came out in leaf and flower at its proper time. A number of plants, which she had been training up under glass frames and in hotbeds, now burst forward at once to meet, at last, the advances of nature; and whatever there was to do, and to take care of, it did not remain the mere labour of hope which it had been, but brought its reward in immediate and substantial enjoyment.

Many a gap among the finest shoots had been produced by Luciana's wild ways, for which she had to console the gardener; and the symmetry of many a leafy crown destroyed. She tried to encourage him to hope that it would all be soon restored again; but he had too deep a feeling, and too pure an idea of the nature of his business, for such grounds of comfort to be of much service with him. Little as the gardener allowed himself to have his attention scattered by other tastes and inclinations, he could the less bear to have the peaceful course interrupted which the plant follows toward its enduring or its transient perfection. A plant is like a self-willed man, out of whom we can obtain all we desire if we will only treat him his own way. A calm eye, a silent method, in all seasons of the year, and at every hour, to do exactly what has then to be done, is required of no one perhaps more than of a gardener. These qualities the good man

possessed in an eminent degree, and on that account Ottilie liked so well to work together with him; but for some time past he had not found himself able to exercise his peculiar talent with any pleasure to himself. Whatever concerned the fruit-gardening, or kitchen-gardening as well as whatever had in time past been required in the ornamental gardens, he understood perfectly. One man succeeds in one thing, another in another: he succeeded in these. In his management of the orangery, of the bulbous flowers, in budding shoots and growing cuttings from the carnations and auriculas, he might challenge Nature herself. But the new ornamental shrubs and fashionable flowers remained in a measure strange to him. He had a kind of shyness of the endless field of botany, which had been lately opening itself; and the strange names humming about his ears made him cross and ill-tempered. The orders for flowers which had been made by his lord and lady in the course of the past year, he considered so much useless waste and extravagance. All the more, as he saw many valuable plants disappear; and as he had ceased to stand on the best possible terms with the nursery gardeners, who he fancied had not been serving him honestly.

Consequently, after a number of attempts, he had formed a sort of a plan, in which Ottilie encouraged him the more readily because its first essential condition was the return of Edward, whose absence in this, as in many other matters, every day had to be felt more and more seriously.

Now that the plants were striking new roots, and putting forth shoots, Ottilie felt herself even more fettered to this spot. It was just a year since she had come there as a stranger, as a mere insignificant creature. How much had she not gained for herself since that time! but, alas! how much had she not also since that time lost again! Never had she been so rich, and never so poor. The feelings of her loss and of her gain

alternated momentarily, chasing each other through her heart; and she could find no other means to help herself, except always to set to work again at what lay nearest to her, with such interest and eagerness as she could command.

That everything she knew to be dear to Edward received especial care from her, may be supposed. And why should she not hope that he himself would now soon come back again; and that, when present, he would show himself grateful for all the care and pains which she had taken for him in his absence?

But there was also a far different employment which she took upon herself in his service: she had undertaken the principal charge of the child, whose nurse it was all the easier for her to be, as they had determined not to put it into the hands of a wet-nurse, but to bring it up by hand with milk and water. In the beautiful season it was much out-of-doors, enjoying the free air; and Ottilie liked best to take it out herself, to carry the unconscious sleeping infant among the flowers and blossoms which should one day smile so brightly on its childhood, — among the young shrubs and plants, which, by their youth, seemed designed to grow up with the young lord to their after stature. When she looked about her, she did not hide from herself to what a high position that child was born: far and wide, wherever the eye could see, all would one day belong to him. How desirable, how necessary, it must therefore be, that it should grow up under the eyes of its father and its mother, and renew and strengthen the union between them!

Ottilie saw all this so clearly, that she represented it to herself as conclusively decided; and for herself, as concerned with it, she never felt at all. Under this clear sky, in this bright sunshine, at once it became clear to her, that her love, if it would perfect itself, must become altogether unselfish; and there were

many moments in which she believed it was an elevation which she had already attained. She only desired the well-being of her friend. She fancied herself able to resign him, and never to see him any more, if she could only know that he was happy. The one only determination she formed for herself was, never to belong to another.

They had taken care that the autumn should be no less brilliant than the spring. Sunflowers were there, and all the other plants which never cease blossoming in autumn, and continue boldly on into the cold; asters especially were sown in the greatest abundance, and scattered about in all directions, to form a starry heaven upon the earth.

FROM OTTILIE'S DIARY.

"Any good thought we have read, anything striking we have heard, we commonly enter in our diary; but if we would take the trouble, at the same time, to mark, of our friends' letters, the remarkable observations, the original ideas, the hasty words so pregnant in meaning, which we might find in them, we should then be rich indeed. We lay aside letters never to read them again, and at last we destroy them out of discretion; and so disappears the most beautiful, the most immediate, breath of life, irrecoverably for ourselves and for others. I intend to make amends in future for such neglect."

"So then, once more the old story of the year is being repeated over again. We are come now, thank God, again to its most charming chapter! The violets and the mayflowers are as its superscriptions and its vignettes. It always makes a pleasant impression on us when we open again at these pages in the book of life."

"We find fault with the poor, particularly with the little ones among them, when they loiter about the streets and beg. Do we not observe that they begin to work again, as soon as ever there is anything for them to do? Hardly has Nature unfolded her smiling treasures, than the children are at once upon her track to open out a calling for themselves. Not one of them is begging any longer: they have each a nosegay to offer you; they were out and gathering it before you had awakened out of your sleep, and the supplicating face looks as sweetly at you as the present which the hand is holding out. No person ever looks miserable who feels that he has a right to make a demand upon you."

"How is it that the year sometimes seems so short, and sometimes is so long? How is it that it is so short when it is passing, and so long as we look back over it? When I think of the past (and it never comes so powerfully over me as in the garden), I feel how the perishing and the enduring work one upon the other; and there is nothing whose endurance is so brief as not to leave behind it some trace of itself, something in its own likeness."

"We are able to tolerate the winter. We fancy that we can extend ourselves more freely when the trees are so spectral, so transparent. They are nothing, but they conceal nothing; but when once the germs and buds begin to show, then we become impatient for the full foliage to come out, for the landscape to put on its body, and the tree to stand before us as a form."

"Everything which is perfect in its kind must pass out beyond and transcend its kind. It must be an inimitable something of another and a higher nature. In many of its tones the nightingale is only a bird;

then it rises up above its class, and seems as if it would teach every feathered creature what singing really is."

"A life without love, without the presence of the beloved, is but poor *comédie à tiroir*. We draw out slide after slide, swiftly tiring of each, and pushing it back to make haste to the next. Even what we know to be good and important hangs but wearily together: every step is an end, and every step is a fresh beginning."

CHAPTER X.

CHARLOTTE meanwhile was well and in good spirits. She was happy in her beautiful boy, whose fair-promising little form every hour was a delight to both her eyes and heart. In him she found a new link to connect her with the world and with her property. Her former activity began anew to stir in her again.

Whichever way she looked, she saw how much had been done in the year that was past; and it was a pleasure to her to contemplate it. Enlivened by the strength of these feelings, she climbed up to the summer-house with Ottilie and the child: and as she laid the latter down on the little table, as on the altar of her house, and saw the two seats still vacant, she thought of gone-by times; and fresh hopes rose out before her for herself and for Ottilie.

Young ladies, perhaps, look timidly round them at this or that young man, carrying on a silent examination, whether they would like to have him for a husband; but whoever has a daughter or a female ward to care for, takes a wider circle in her survey. And so it fared at this moment with Charlotte, to whom, as she thought of how they had once sat side by side in that summer-house, a union did not seem impossible between the captain and Ottilie. It had not remained unknown to her, that the plans for the advantageous marriage, which had been proposed to the captain, had come to nothing.

Charlotte went on up the cliff, and Ottilie carried the child. A number of reflections crowded upon the

former. Even on the firm land there are frequent enough shipwrecks; and the true wise conduct is to recover ourselves, and refit our vessel as fast as possible. Is life to be calculated only by its gains and losses? Who has not made arrangement on arrangement, and has not seen them disturbed? How often does not a man strike into a road, and lose it again! How often are we not turned aside from one point which we had sharply before our eye, but only to reach some higher stage! The traveller, to his greatest annoyance, breaks a wheel upon his journey, and through this unpleasant accident makes some charming acquaintance, and forms some new connection, which has an influence on all his life. Destiny grants us our wishes, but in its own way, in order to give us something beyond our wishes.

Among these and similar reflections they reached the new building on the hill, where they intended to establish themselves for the summer. The view all round them was far more beautiful than could have been supposed: every little obstruction had been removed; all the loveliness of the landscape, whatever nature, whatever the season of the year, had done for it, came out in its beauty before the eye; and already the young plantations, which had been made to fill up a few openings, were beginning to look green, and to form an agreeable connecting link between parts which before stood separate.

The house itself was nearly habitable: the views, particularly from the upper rooms, were of the richest variety. The longer you looked round you, the more beauties you discovered. What magnificent effects would be produced here at the different hours of day, — by sunlight and by moonlight! Nothing could be more delightful than to come and live there; and, now that she found all the rough work finished, Charlotte longed to be busy again. An upholsterer, a tapestry-

hanger, a painter who could lay on the colours with patterns and a little gilding, were all which were required; and these were soon found, and in a short time the building was completed. Kitchen and cellar stores were quickly laid in; being so far from the castle, it was necessary to have all essentials provided, and the two ladies with the child went up and settled there. From this residence, as from a new centre, unknown walks opened out to them; and in these high regions the free, fresh air and the beautiful weather were thoroughly delightful.

Ottilie's favourite walk, sometimes alone, sometimes with the child, was down below toward the plane-trees, along a pleasant foot-path leading directly to the point where one of the boats was kept chained in which people used to go across the water. She often took pleasure in a sail on the water, but without the child, as Charlotte was a little uneasy about it. She never missed, however, paying a daily visit to the castle garden and the gardener, and going to look with him at his show of greenhouse-plants, which were all out now, enjoying the free air.

At this beautiful season, Charlotte was much pleased to receive a visit from an English nobleman, who had made Edward's acquaintance abroad, having met him more than once, and who was now curious to see the laying out of his park, which he had heard so much admired. He brought with him a letter of introduction from the count, and introduced at the same time his travelling companion, a quiet but most agreeable man. He went about seeing everything, sometimes with Charlotte and Ottilie, sometimes with the gardeners and the foresters, often with his friend, and now and then alone; and they could perceive clearly from his observations, that he took an interest in such matters, and understood them well, indeed, that he had himself probably executed many such.

Although he was now advanced in life, he entered warmly into everything which could serve for an ornament to life, or contribute anything to its importance.

In his presence the ladies came first properly to enjoy what was round them. His practised eye received every effect in its freshness; and he found all the more pleasure in what was before him, as he had not previously known the place, and was scarcely able to distinguish what man had done there from what nature had provided.

We may even say, that, through his remarks, the park grew and enriched itself: he was able to anticipate in their fulfilment the promises of the growing plantations. There was not a spot where there was any effect which could be either heightened or produced, but what he observed it.

In one place he pointed to a fountain, which, if it should be cleaned out, promised to be the most beautiful spot for a picnic-party. In another, to a cave which had only to be enlarged and swept clear of rubbish to form a desirable seat. A few trees might be cut down, and a view would be opened from it of some grand masses of rock towering magnificently against the sky. He wished the owners joy that so much was still remaining for them to do; and he besought them not to be in a hurry about it, but to keep for themselves for years to come the pleasures of shaping and improving.

At the hours the ladies usually spent alone, he was never in the way; for he was occupied the greatest part of the day in catching, in a portable camera obscura, such views in the park as would make good paintings, and drawing from them, in order to secure some desirable result from his travels for himself and others. For many years past he had been in the habit of doing this in all remarkable places which he

visited, and had provided himself by it with a most charming and interesting collection. He showed the ladies a large portfolio which he had brought with him, and entertained them with the pictures and with descriptions. And it was a real delight to them, here in their solitude, to travel so pleasantly over the world, and see sweep past them shores and havens, mountains, lakes, and rivers, cities, castles, and a hundred other localities which have a name in history.

Each of the two ladies had an especial interest in it: Charlotte the more general interest in whatever was historically remarkable; Ottilie dwelling in preference on the scenes of which Edward used most to talk, — where he liked best to stay, and which he would most often revisit. Every man has somewhere, far or near, his peculiar localities which attract him; scenes which, according to his character, either from first impressions, or from particular associations, or from habit, have a charm for him beyond all others.

She therefore asked the earl which of all these places pleased him best, where he would like to take up his abode if he might choose. There was more than one lovely spot which he pointed out, with what had happened to him there to make him love and value it; and the peculiar accentuated French in which he spoke made it most pleasant to listen to him.

To the question, which was his ordinary residence, which he properly considered his home, he replied, without any hesitation, in a manner quite unexpected by the ladies:

"I have accustomed myself by this time to be at home everywhere; and I find, after all, that it is much more agreeable to allow others to plant and build and keep house for me. I have no desire to return to my own possessions, partly on political grounds, but principally because my son, for whose sake alone it was any

pleasure to me to remain and work there, — who will, by and by, inherit it, and with whom I hoped to enjoy it, — took no interest in the place at all, but has gone out to India, where, like many other foolish fellows, he fancies he can make a higher use of his life. He is more likely to squander it.

"Assuredly we spend far too much labour and outlay in preparation for life. Instead of beginning at once to make ourselves happy in a moderate condition, we spread ourselves out wider and wider, only to make ourselves more and more uncomfortable. Who is there now to enjoy my mansion, my park, my gardens? Not I, nor any of mine — strangers, visitors or curious, restless travellers.

"Even with large means, we are ever but half and half at home, especially in the country, where we miss many things to which we have become accustomed in town. The book for which we are most anxious is not to be had, and just the thing we wanted most is forgotten. We take to being domestic, only again to go out of ourselves: if we do not go astray of our own will and caprice, circumstances, passions, accidents, necessity, and one does not know what besides, manage it for us."

Little did the earl imagine how deeply his friend would be touched by these random observations. It is a danger to which we are all of us exposed when we venture on general remarks in a society the circumstances of which we might have supposed were well enough known to us. Such casual wounds, even from well-meaning, kindly-disposed people, were nothing new to Charlotte. She so clearly, so thoroughly, knew and understood the world, that it gave her no particular pain if it did happen, that, through somebody's thoughtlessness or imprudence, she had her attention forced into this or that unpleasant direction. But it was very different with Ottilie. At her half-conscious

age, at which she rather felt than saw, and at which she was disposed, indeed was obliged, to turn her eyes away from what she should not or would not see, Ottilie was thrown by this melancholy conversation into the most pitiable state. It rudely tore away the pleasant veil from before her eyes: and it seemed to her as if what had been done all this time for house and court, for park and garden, for all their wide environs, were utterly in vain, because he to whom it all belonged could not enjoy it; because he, like their present visitor, had been driven out to wander up and down in the world — and indeed in the most perilous paths of it — by those who were nearest and dearest to him. She was accustomed to listen in silence; but, on this occasion, she sat on in the most painful condition, which, indeed, was made rather worse than better by what the stranger went on to say, as he continued, with his peculiar, humourous gravity:

"I think I am now on the right way. I look upon myself steadily as a traveller, who renounces many things in order to enjoy more. I am accustomed to change: it has become, indeed, a necessity to me, just as in the opera, people are always looking out for new and new decorations, because there have already been so many. I know very well what I am to expect from the best hotels, and what from the worst. It may be as good or it may be as bad as it will, but I nowhere find anything to which I am accustomed; and in the end it comes to much the same thing whether we depend for our enjoyment entirely on the regular order of custom, or entirely on the caprices of accident. I have never to vex myself now because this thing is mislaid, or that thing is lost; because the room in which I live is uninhabitable, and I must have it repaired; because somebody has broken my favourite cup, and for a long time nothing tastes well out of any other. All this I am happily spared. If the

house catches fire about my ears, my people quietly pack my things up, and we pass away out of the town in search of other quarters. And considering all these advantages, when I reckon carefully, I find, that, by the end of the year, I have not sacrificed more than it would have cost me to be at home."

In this description Ottilie saw nothing but Edward before her. How he, too, was now amidst discomfort and hardship, marching along untrodden roads, lying out in the fields in danger and want, and, in all this insecurity and hazard, growing accustomed to be homeless and friendless, learning to fling away everything that he might have nothing to lose. Fortunately the party separated for a short time. Ottilie escaped to her room, where she could give way to her tears. No weight of sorrow had ever pressed so heavily upon her as this clear perception (which she tried, as people usually do, to make still clearer to herself), that men love to dally with and exaggerate the evils which circumstances have once begun to inflict upon them.

Edward's condition appeared to her in a light so piteous, so miserable, that she made up her mind, let it cost her what it would, that she would do everything in her power to unite him again with Charlotte, and she herself would go and hide her sorrow and her love in some silent scene, and beguile the time with such employment as she could find.

Meanwhile the earl's companion, a quiet, sensible man and a keen observer, had remarked the untowardness of the conversation, and spoke to his friend about it. The latter knew nothing of the circumstances of the family; but the other — being one of those persons whose principal interest in travelling lay in gathering up the strange occurrences which arose out of the natural or artificial relations of society, which were produced by the conflict of the restraint of law with the violence of the will, of the understanding with the

reason, of passion with prejudice — had some time before made himself acquainted with the outline of the story; and, since he had been in the family, he had learned exactly all that had taken place, and the present position in which things were standing.

The earl, of course, was very sorry; but it was not a thing to make him uneasy. A man would have to be silent altogether in society were he never to find himself in such a position; for not only important remarks, but the most trivial expressions, may happen to clash in an inharmonious key with the interest of somebody present.

"We will set things right this evening," said he, "and escape from any general conversation: you shall let them hear one of the many charming anecdotes with which your portfolio and your memory have enriched themselves while we have been abroad."

However, with the best intentions, the strangers did not, on this next occasion, succeed any better in gratifying their friends with unalloyed entertainment. The earl's friend told a number of singular stories — some serious, some amusing, some touching, some terrible — with which he had roused their attention and strained their interest to the highest tension; and he thought to conclude with a strange but softer incident, little dreaming how nearly it would touch his listeners.

THE TWO STRANGE CHILDREN.

"Two children of neighbouring families, a boy and a girl, of such respective ages as would well suit their marrying at some future time, were brought up together with this agreeable prospect; and the parents on both sides, who were people of some position in the world, looked forward with pleasure to their future union.

"It was too soon observed, however, that the pur-

pose seemed likely to fail: the dispositions of both children promised everything which was good, but there was an unaccountable antipathy between them. Perhaps they were too much like each other. Both were thoughtful, clear in their desires, and firm in their purposes. Each separately was beloved and respected by his or her companions; but, whenever they were together, they were always antagonists. Forming separate plans for themselves, they only met to mutually cross and thwart one another; never emulating each other in pursuit of one aim, but always fighting for a single object. Good-natured and amiable everywhere else, they were spiteful and even malicious whenever they came in contact.

"This singular relation first showed itself in their childish games, and it continued with their advancing years. The boys used to play at soldiers, divide into parties, and give each other battle: and the fierce, haughty young lady set herself at once at the head of one of the armies, and fought against the other with such animosity and bitterness that the latter would have been put to a shameful flight, except for the desperate bravery of her own particular rival, who at last disarmed his antagonist and took her prisoner; and even then she defended herself with so much fury, that to save his eyes from being torn out, and, at the same time, not to injure his enemy, he had been obliged to take off his silk handkerchief, and tie with it her hands behind her back.

"This she never forgave him: she made so many attempts, she laid so many plans, to injure him, that the parents, who had been long watching these singular passions, came to an understanding together, and resolved to separate these two hostile creatures, and sacrifice their favourite hopes.

"The boy soon distinguished himself in the new situation in which he was placed. He mastered every

subject which he was taught. His friends and his own inclination chose the army for his profession; and everywhere, let him be where he would, he was looked up to and beloved. His disposition seemed formed to labour for the well-being and pleasure of others; and he himself, without being clearly conscious of it, was in himself happy at having got rid of the only antagonist which nature had assigned to him.

"The girl, on the other hand, became at once an altered creature. Her growing age; the progress of her education; above all, her own inward feelings,— drew her away from the boisterous games with boys in which she had hitherto delighted. Altogether, she seemed to want something: there was nothing anywhere about her which could deserve to excite her hatred, and she had never found any one whom she could think worthy of her love.

"A young man, somewhat older than her previous neighbour-antagonist, of rank, property, and consequence, beloved in society, and much sought after by women, bestowed his affections upon her. It was the first time that friend, lover, or servant had displayed any interest in her. The preference he showed for her above others who were older, more cultivated, and of more brilliant pretensions than herself, was naturally gratifying: the constancy of his attention, which was never obtrusive; his standing by her faithfully through a number of unpleasant incidents; his quiet suit, which was declared indeed to her parents, but which, as she was still very young, he did not press, only asking to be allowed to hope,—all this engaged him to her; and custom, and the assumption in the world that the thing was already settled, carried her along with it. She had so often been called his betrothed that at last she began to consider herself so; and neither she nor any one else ever thought any further trial could be necessary before she exchanged rings with the person

who for so long a time had passed for her intended.

"The peaceful course which the affair had all along followed was not at all precipitated by the betrothal. Things were allowed to go on, on both sides, just as they were: they were happy in being together, and they could enjoy to the end the fair season of the year as the spring of their future more serious life.

"The absent youth had meanwhile grown up into everything which was most admirable. He had obtained a well-deserved rank in his profession, and came home on leave to visit his family. Toward his fair neighbour he found himself again in a natural but singular position. For some time past she had been nourishing in herself such affectionate family feelings as suited her position as a bride; she was in harmony with everything about her; she believed that she was happy; and, in a certain sense, she was so. Now, for the first time after a long interval, something again stood in her way. It was not to be hated — she had become incapable of hatred. Indeed, the childish hatred, which had in fact been nothing more than an obscure recognition of inward worth, expressed itself now in a happy astonishment, in pleasure at meeting, in ready acknowledgments, in a half willing, half unwilling, and yet irresistible, attraction; and all this was mutual. Their long separation gave occasion for longer conversations; even their old childish foolishness served, now that they had grown wiser, to amuse them as they looked back; and they felt as if at least they were bound to make good their petulant hatred by friendliness and attention to each other, as if their first violent injustice to each other ought not to be left without open acknowledgment.

"On his side it all remained in a sensible, desirable moderation. His position, his circumstances, his efforts,

his ambition, found him so abundant an occupation, that the friendliness of this pretty bride he received as a very thankworthy present, but without, therefore, even so much as thinking of her in connection with himself, or entertaining the slightest jealousy of the bridegroom, with whom he stood on the best possible terms.

"With her, however, it was altogether different. She seemed to herself as if she had awakened out of a dream. Her fightings with her young neighbour had been the beginnings of an affection; and this violent antagonism was no more than an equally violent innate passion for him, first showing under the form of opposition. She could remember nothing else than that she had always loved him. She laughed over her martial encounter with him with weapons in her hand: she dwelt upon the delight of her feelings when he disarmed her. She imagined that it had given her the greatest happiness when he bound her, and whatever she had done afterward to injure him or to vex him presented itself to her as only an innocent means of attracting his attention. She cursed their separation. She bewailed the sleepy state into which she had fallen. She execrated the insidious, lazy routine which had betrayed her into accepting so insignificant a bridegroom. She was transformed, doubly transformed, forward or backward, whichever way we like to take it.

"She kept her feelings entirely to herself; but if any one could have divined them, and shared them with her, he could not have blamed her: for indeed the bridegroom could not sustain a comparison with the other as soon as they were seen together. If a sort of regard to the one could not be refused, the other excited the fullest trust and confidence. If one made an agreeable acquaintance, the other we should desire for a companion; and in extraordinary cases,

where higher demands might have to be made on them, the bridegroom was a person to be utterly despaired of, while the other would give the feeling of perfect security.

"There is a peculiar, innate tact in women which discovers to them differences of this kind, and they have cause as well as occasion to cultivate it.

"The more the fair bride was nourishing all these feelings in secret, the less opportunity there was for any one to speak a word which could tell in favour of her bridegroom, to remind her of what her duty and their relative position advised and commanded, — indeed, what an unalterable necessity seemed now irrevocably to require: the poor heart gave itself up entirely to its passion.

"On one side she was bound inextricably to the bridegroom by the world, by her family, and by her own promise: on the other, the ambitious young man made no secret of what he was thinking and planning for himself, conducting himself toward her only as a kind, but not at all a tender, brother, and speaking of his departure as immediately impending; and now it seemed as if her early childish spirit woke up again in her with all its spleen and violence, and was preparing itself in its distemper, on this higher stage of life, to work more effectively and destructively. She determined that she would die to punish the once hated, and now so passionately loved, youth for his want of interest in her; and, as she could not possess himself, at least she would wed herself for ever to his imagination and to his repentance. Her dead image should cling to him, and he should never be free from it. He should never cease to reproach himself for not having understood, examined, valued her feelings toward him.

"This singular insanity accompanied her wherever she went. She kept it concealed under all sorts of forms; and, although people thought her very odd, no

one was observant enough or clever enough to discover the real inward reason.

"In the meantime, friends, relations, acquaintances, had exhausted themselves in contrivances for pleasure-parties. Scarcely a day passed, but something new and unexpected was set on foot. There was hardly a pretty spot in the country round which had not been decked out and prepared for the reception of some merry party. And now our young visitor, before departing, wished to do his part as well, and invited the young couple, with a small family circle, to an expedition on the water. They went on board a large, beautiful vessel, dressed out in all its colours, — one of the yachts which had a small saloon, and a cabin or two besides, and are intended to carry with them upon the water the comfort and conveniences of land.

"They set out upon the broad river with music-playing. The party had collected in the cabin, below deck, during the heat of the day, and were amusing themselves with games. Their young host, who could never remain without doing something, had taken charge of the helm, to relieve the old master of the vessel; and the latter had lain down and was fast asleep. It was a moment when the steerer required all his circumspectness, as the vessel was nearing a spot where two islands narrowed the channel of the river; while shallow banks of shingle stretching off, first on one side and then on the other, made the navigation difficult and dangerous. Prudent and sharp-sighted as he was, he thought for a moment that it would be better to wake the master; but he felt confident in himself, and he thought he would venture and make straight for the narrows. At this moment his fair enemy appeared upon deck with a wreath of flowers in her hair. 'Take this to remember me by,' she cried out. She took it off, and threw it to the steerer. 'Don't disturb me,' he answered quickly, as

he caught the wreath: 'I require all my powers and all my attention now.' 'You will never be disturbed by me any more,' she cried: 'you will never see me again.' As she spoke, she rushed to the forward part of the vessel; and from thence she sprang into the water. Voice upon voice called out, 'Save her, save her: she is sinking!' He was in the most terrible difficulty. In the confusion the old shipmaster woke, and tried to catch the rudder, which the young man bid him take. But there was no time to change hands. The vessel stranded; and at the same moment, flinging off the heaviest of his upper garments, he sprang into the water, and swam toward his beautiful enemy. The water is a friendly element to a man who is at home in it, and who knows how to deal with it; it buoyed him up, and acknowledged the strong swimmer as its master. He soon overtook the beautiful girl, who had been swept away before him: he caught hold of her, raised her and supported her; and both of them were carried violently down by the current, till the shoals and islands were left far behind, and the river was again open and running smoothly. He now began to collect himself: they had passed the first immediate danger, in which he had been obliged to act mechanically without time to think; he raised his head as high as he could to look about him, and then swam with all his might to a low, bushy point, which ran out conveniently into the stream. There he brought his fair burden to dry land, but he could find no signs of life in her: he was in despair, when he caught sight of a trodden path leading among the bushes. Again he caught her up in his arms, hurried forward, and presently reached a solitary cottage. There he found kind, good people, — a young married couple; the misfortunes and dangers were soon explained; every remedy he could think of was instantly applied; a bright fire blazed up; woollen blankets were spread on a bed;

counterpane, cloaks, skins, whatever there was at hand which would serve for warmth, were heaped over her as fast as possible. The desire to save life overpowered, for the present, every other consideration. Nothing was left undone to bring back to life the beautiful, half-torpid, naked body. It succeeded: she opened her eyes! her friend was before her: she threw her heavenly arms about his neck. In this position she remained for a time, and then a stream of tears burst out and completed her recovery. 'Will you forsake me,' she cried, 'now, when I find you again thus?' 'Never,' he answered, 'never,' hardly knowing what he said or did. 'Only consider yourself,' she added, 'take care of yourself, for your sake and for mine.'

"She now began to collect herself, and for the first time recollected the state in which she was; she could not be ashamed before her darling, before her preserver; but she gladly allowed him to go, that he might take care of himself: for the clothes he still wore were wet and dripping.

"Their young hosts considered what could be done. The husband offered the young man, and the wife offered the fair lady, the dresses in which they had been married, which were hanging up in full perfection, and sufficient for a complete suit, inside and out, for two people. In a short time our pair of adventurers were not only equipped, but in full costume. They looked most charming, gazed at one another, when they met, with admiration; and then with infinite affection, half laughing at the same time at the quaintness of their appearance, they fell into each other's arms.

"The power of youth and the quickening spirit of love in a few moments completely restored them, and there was nothing wanted but music to have set them both off dancing.

"To have found themselves brought from the water on dry land, from death into life, from the circle of

their families into a wilderness, from despair into rapture, from indifference to affection and to love, all in a moment, — the head was not strong enough to bear it: it must either burst, or go distracted; or, if so distressing an alternative were to be escaped, the heart must put out all its efforts.

"Lost wholly in each other, it was long before they recollected the alarm and anxiety of those who had been left behind; and they themselves, indeed, could not well think, without alarm and anxiety, how they were again to encounter them. 'Shall we run away? shall we hide ourselves?' said the young man. 'We will remain together,' she said, as she clung to his neck.

"The peasant, having heard them say that a boat was aground on the shoal, had hurried down, without stopping to ask another question, to the shore. When he arrived there, he saw the vessel coming safely down the stream. After much labour it had been got off; and they were now going on in uncertainty, hoping to find their lost ones again somewhere. The peasant shouted and made signs to them, and at last caught the attention of those on board: then he ran to a spot where there was a convenient place for landing, and went on signalling and shouting till the vessel's head was turned toward the shore; and what a scene there was for them when they landed! The parents of the two betrothed first pressed forward to the bank: the poor, loving bridegroom had almost lost his senses. They had scarcely learned that their dear children had been saved, when in their strange disguise the latter came forward out of the bushes to meet them. No one recognised them till they had come quite close. 'Who do I see?' cried the mothers. 'What do I see?' cried the fathers. The preserved ones flung themselves on the ground before them. 'Your children,' they called out: 'a pair.' 'Forgive us!' cried the maiden.

'Give us your blessing!' cried the young man. 'Give us your blessing!' they cried both, as all the world stood still in wonder. 'Your blessing!' was repeated the third time; and who would have been able to refuse it?"

CHAPTER XI.

THE narrator made a pause, or, rather, he had already finished his story, before he observed the emotion into which Charlotte had been thrown by it. She got up, uttered some sort of an apology, and left the room. To her it was a well-known history. The principal incident in it had really taken place with the captain and a neighbour of her own, not exactly, indeed, as the Englishman had related it. But the main features of it were the same. It had only been more finished off and elaborated in its details, as stories of that kind always are, when they have passed first through the lips of the multitude, and then through the fancy of a clever and imaginative narrator; the result of the process being usually to leave everything and nothing as it was.

Ottilie followed Charlotte, as the two friends begged her to do; and then it was the earl's turn to remark, that perhaps they had made a second mistake, and that the subject of the story had been well known to, or was in some way connected with, the family. "We must take care," he added, "that we do no more mischief here; we seem to bring little good to our entertainers for all the kindness and hospitality which they have shown us: we will make some excuse for ourselves, and then take our leave."

"I must confess," answered his companion, "that there is something else which still holds me here; and, on account of which, I should be sorry to leave this house without having it explained to me, and becoming better acquainted with it. You were too busy

yourself yesterday, when we were in the park with the camera, in looking for spots where you could make your sketches, to have observed anything else which was passing. You left the broad walk, you remember, and went to a sequestered place on the side of the lake. There was a fine view of the opposite shore, which you wished to take. Well, Ottilie, who was with us, got up to follow, and then proposed that she and I should find our way to you in the boat. I got in with her, and was delighted with the skill of my fair conductress. I assured her, that never since I had been in Switzerland, where the young ladies so often fill the place of the boatman, had I been so pleasantly ferried over the water. At the same time, I could not help asking her why she had shown such an objection to going the way which you had gone, along the little by-path. I had observed her shrink from it with a sort of painful uneasiness. She was not at all offended. 'If you will promise not to laugh at me,' she answered, 'I will tell you as much as I know about it; but to myself it is a mystery which I cannot explain. There is a particular spot in that path which I never pass without a strange shudder passing over me, which I do not remember ever feeling anywhere else, and which I cannot the least understand. But I shrink from exposing myself to the sensation, because it is followed immediately after by a pain on the left side of my head, from which at other times I suffer severely.' We landed. Ottilie was engaged with you; and I took the opportunity of examining the spot, which she pointed out to me as we went by on the water. I was not a little surprised to find there distinct traces of coal, in sufficient quantities to convince me, that, at a short distance below the surface, there must be a considerable bed of it.

"Pardon me, my lord: I see you smile; and I know very well that you have no faith in these things about

which I am so eager, and that it is only your sense and your kindness which enable you to tolerate me. However, it is impossible for me to leave this place without trying on that beautiful creature an experiment with the pendulum."

Whenever these matters came to be spoken of, the earl never failed to repeat the same objections to them over and over again; and his friend endured them all quietly and patiently, remaining firm, nevertheless, to his own opinion, and holding to his own wishes. He, too, repeatedly showed that there was no reason, because the experiment did not succeed with every one, that they should give them up, as if there were nothing in them but fancy. They should be examined into all the more earnestly and scrupulously; and there was no doubt that the result would be the discovery of a number of affinities of inorganic creatures for one another, and of organic creatures for them, and again for each other, which at present were unknown to us.

He had already spread out his apparatus of gold rings, marcasites, and other metallic substances, which he always carried about with himself, in a pretty little box; and he suspended a piece of metal by a string over another piece, which he placed upon the table. "Now, my lord," he said, "you may take what pleasure you please (I can see in your face what you are feeling) at perceiving that nothing will set itself in motion with me or for me. But my proceedings are no more than a pretext; when the ladies come back, they will be curious to know what strange work we are about."

The ladies returned. Charlotte understood at once what was going on. "I have heard much of these things," she said, "but I never saw the effect myself. You have everything ready there. Let me try whether I can succeed in producing anything."

She took the thread into her hand; and, as she was perfectly serious, she held it steady, and without any

agitation. Not the slightest motion, however, could be detected. Ottilie was then called upon to try. She held the pendulum, still more quietly and unconsciously, over the plate on the table. But in a moment the swinging piece of metal began to stir with a distinct rotatory action, and turned as they moved the position of the plate, first to one side and then to the other; now in circles, now in ellipses; or else describing a series of straight lines; doing all the earl's friend could expect, and far exceeding, indeed, all his expectations.

The earl himself was a little staggered; but the other could never be satisfied from delight and curiosity, and begged for the experiment again and again, with all sorts of variations. Ottilie was complacent enough to gratify him; till at last she politely requested to be allowed to go, as her headache had come on again. In further admiration, and even rapture, he assured her with enthusiasm that he would cure her for ever of her disorder, if she would only trust herself to his remedies. For a moment they did not know what he meant; but Charlotte, who quickly saw what he was about, declined his well-meant offer, not liking to have introduced and practised about her a thing of which she had always had the strongest apprehensions.

The strangers were gone, and, notwithstanding their having been the inadvertent cause of strange and painful emotions, left the wish behind them that this meeting might not be the last. Charlotte now made use of the beautiful weather to return visits in the neighbourhood, which, indeed, gave her work enough to do, seeing that the whole country round, some from a real interest, some merely from custom, had been most attentive in calling to inquire after her. At home her delight was the sight of the child, and really it well deserved all love and interest. People saw in it a

wonderful child, — nay, a prodigy: the brightest, sunniest little face; a fine, well-proportioned body, strong and healthy: and, what surprised them more, the double resemblance, which became more and more conspicuous. In figure, and in the features of the face, it was like the captain: the eyes every day it was less easy to distinguish from the eyes of Ottilie.

Ottilie herself, partly from this remarkable affinity, perhaps still more under the influence of that sweet woman's feeling which makes them regard with the most tender affection the offspring of the man they love, even when born to him by another woman, was as good as a mother to the little creature as it grew; or, rather, she was a second mother of another kind. If Charlotte was absent, Ottilie remained alone with the child and the nurse. Nanny had for some time past been jealous of the boy for monopolising the entire affections of her mistress: she had left her in a fit of crossness, and gone back to her mother. Ottilie would carry the child about in the open air, and by degrees took longer and longer walks with him. She took her bottle of milk, to give the child its food when it wanted any. Generally, too, she took a book with her; and so, with the child in her arms, reading and wandering, she made a very pretty Penserosa.

CHAPTER XII.

THE object of the campaign was attained; and Edward, with crosses and decorations, was honourably dismissed. He betook himself at once to the same little estate, where he found exact accounts of his family waiting for him, on whom, all this time, without their having observed it or known of it, a sharp watch had been kept under his orders. His quiet residence looked most sweet and pleasant when he reached it. In accordance with his orders, various improvements had been made in his absence; and what was wanting to the establishment in extent was compensated by its internal comforts and conveniences. Edward, accustomed by his more active habits of life to take decided steps, determined to execute a project which he long had sufficient time to think over. First of all, he invited the major to come to him. Great was their joy at meeting again. The friendships of boyhood, like relationship of blood, possess this important advantage, that mistakes and misunderstandings never produce irreparable injury, and the old regard after a time will always reëstablish itself.

Edward began by inquiring about the situation of his friend, and learned that fortune had favoured him exactly as he most could have wished. He then half seriously asked whether there was not something going forward about a marriage, to which he received a most decided and positive denial.

"I cannot and will not have any reserve with you," he proceeded. "I will tell you at once what my own

feelings are, and what I intend to do. You know my passion for Ottilie: you must long have comprehended that it was this which drove me into the campaign. I do not deny that I desired to be rid of a life which, without her, would be of no further value to me. At the same time, however, I acknowledge that I could never bring myself utterly to despair. The prospect of happiness with her was so beautiful, so infinitely charming, that it was not possible for me entirely to renounce it. Feelings, too, which I cannot explain, and a number of happy omens, have combined to strengthen me in the belief, in the assurance, that Ottilie will one day be mine. The glass, with our initials cut upon it, which was thrown into the air when the foundation-stone was laid, did not go to pieces: it was caught, and I have it again in my possession. After many miserable hours of uncertainty, spent in this place, I said to myself, 'I will put myself in the place of this glass, and it shall be an omen whether our union be possible or not. I will go: I will seek for death, not like a madman, but like a man who still hopes that he may live. Ottilie shall be the prize for which I fight. Ottilie shall be behind the ranks of the enemy: in every intrenchment, in every beleaguered fortress, I shall hope to find her and to win her. I will do wonders, with the wish to survive them; with the hope to gain Ottilie, not to lose her.' These feelings have led me on, they have stood by me through all dangers; and now I find myself like one who has arrived at his goal, who, having overcome every difficulty, has nothing more left in his way. Ottilie is mine; and whatever lies between the thought and the execution of it I can only regard as unimportant."

"With a few strokes you blot out," replied the major, "all the objections that we can or ought to urge upon you; and yet they must be repeated. I must

leave it to yourself to recall the full value of your relation with your wife; but you owe it to her, and you owe it to yourself, not to close your eyes to it. How can I so much as mention that you have had a son given to you, without acknowledging at once that you two belong to one another for ever; that you are bound, for this little creature's sake, to live united, that united you may educate it, and provide for its future welfare?"

"It is no more than the blindness of parents," answered Edward, "when they imagine their existence to be of so much importance to their children. Whatever lives finds nourishment and finds assistance; and if the son who has early lost his father does not spend so easy, so favoured a youth, he profits, perhaps, for that very reason, in being trained sooner for the world, and comes to a timely knowledge that he must accommodate himself to others, — a thing which sooner or later we are all forced to learn. Here, however, even these considerations are irrelevant: we are sufficiently well off to be able to provide for more children than one, and it is neither right nor kind to accumulate so large a property on a single head."

The major attempted to say something of Charlotte's worth and Edward's long-standing attachment to her, but the latter hastily interrupted him. "We committed ourselves to a foolish thing, — that I see all too clearly Whoever, in middle age, attempts to realise the wishes and hopes of his early youth invariably deceives himself. Each decade of a man's life has its own fortunes, its own hopes, its own desires. Woe to him who, either by circumstances or by his own infatuation, is induced to grasp at anything before him or behind him. We have done a foolish thing. Are we to abide by it all our lives? Are we to hesitate indulging in what the customs of the age do not forbid? In how many matters do men recall their

intentions and their actions! And shall it not be allowed to them here, here where the question is not of this thing or of that, but of everything; not of our single condition of life, but of the whole complex life itself?"

Again the major adroitly and impressively urged on Edward to consider what he owed to his wife, what was due to his family, to the world, and to his own position; but he could not succeed in producing the slightest impression.

"All these questions, my friend," he returned, "I have considered already again and again. They have passed before me in the storm of battle, when the earth was shaking with the thunder of the cannon, with the balls singing and whistling round me, with my comrades falling right and left, my horse shot under me, my hat pierced with bullets. They have floated before me by the still watch-fire under the starry vault of the sky. I have thoroughly thought on them all, felt them all through. I have weighed them; and I have satisfied myself about them again and again, and now for ever. At such moments why should I not acknowledge it to you? you, too, were in my thoughts, you, too, belonged to my circle; as, indeed, you and I have long belonged to one another. If I have ever been in your debt, I am now in a position to repay it with interest; if you have been in mine, you have now the means to make it good to me. I know that you love Charlotte, and she deserves it. I know that you are not indifferent to her, and why should she not feel your worth? Take her at my hand, and give Ottilie to me, and we shall be the happiest beings upon the earth."

"If you choose to assign me so high a character," replied the major, "I have to be all the more strict and prudent. Whatever there may be in this proposal to make it attractive to me, instead of simplifying the

problem, it only increases the difficulty of it. The question is now of me as well as of you. The fortunes, the good name, the honour of two men, hitherto unsullied with a breath, will be exposed to hazard by so strange a proceeding, to call it by no harsher name; and we shall appear before the world in a highly questionable light."

"Our very characters being what they are," replied Edward, "give us a right to take this single liberty. A man who has borne himself honourably through a whole life makes an action honourable which might appear ambiguous in others. As concerns myself, after these last trials which I have taken upon myself, after the difficult and dangerous actions I have accomplished for others, I now feel entitled to do something for myself. For you and Charlotte, that part of the business may, if you like, be given up; but neither you nor any one shall keep me from doing what I have determined. If I may look for help and furtherance, I shall be ready to do all that can be wished; but if I am to be left to myself, or if obstacles are to be thrown in my way, something extreme is sure to be the consequence."

The major thought it his duty to combat Edward's purposes as long as it was possible, and now he changed the mode of his attack and tried a diversion. He seemed to give way, and only spoke of the form of what they would have to do to bring about this separation and these new unions; and so mentioned a number of unpleasant, undesirable matters, which put Edward into the worst of tempers.

"I see plainly," he cried at last, "that what we desire can only be carried by storm, whether it be from our enemies or from our friends. I keep clearly before my own eyes what I demand, what, one way or another, I must have; and I will seize it promptly and surely. Connections like ours, I know very well,

cannot be broken up and reconstructed again without much being thrown down which is standing, and much having to give way which would be glad enough to continue. We shall come to no conclusion by thinking about it. All rights are alike to the understanding, and it is always easy to throw extra weight into the ascending scale. Do you make up your mind, my friend, to act, and act promptly, for me and for yourself. Disentangle and untie the knots, and tie them up again. Do not be deterred by any considerations. We have already given the world something to say about us. It will talk about us once more; and, when we have ceased to be a nine days' wonder, it will forget us as it forgets everything else, and allow us to follow our own way without further concern with us." The major had nothing further to say, and was at last obliged to submit to Edward's treating the matter as now conclusively settled, going into detail concerning what had to be done, and picturing the future in the most cheerful manner, and even joking about it; then again he went on seriously and thoughtfully, "If we think to leave ourselves to the hope, to the expectation, that all will go right again of itself, that accident will lead us straight, and take care of us, it will be a most culpable self-deception. In such a way it would be impossible for us to save ourselves, or reëstablish our peace again. I who have been the innocent cause of it all, how am I ever to console myself? By my own importunity I prevailed on Charlotte to write to you to stay with us, and Ottilie came in consequence of this change. We have had no control over what ensued out of this; but we have the power to make it innocuous, to guide the new circumstances to our own happiness. Can you turn away your eyes from the fair and beautiful prospects I open to us? Can you insist to me, can you insist to us all, on a wretched renunciation of them? Do you think it possible? Is

it possible? Will there be no vexations, no bitterness, no inconvenience, to overcome, if we resolve to fall back into our old state? and will any good, any happiness whatever, arise out of it? Will your own rank, will the high position you have earned, be any pleasure to you, if you are to be prevented from visiting me, or from living with me? And, after what has passed, it would not be anything but painful. Charlotte and I, with all our property, would only find ourselves in a melancholy state. And if, like other men of the world, you can persuade yourself that years and separation will eradicate our feelings, will obliterate impressions so deeply engraved, why, it is these very years which it would be better to spend in happiness and comfort than in pain and misery. But the last and most important point of all which I have to urge is this: supposing that we, our outward and inward condition being what it is, could nevertheless make up our minds to wait at all hazards, and bear what is laid upon us, what is to become of Ottilie, who would have to leave our family and mix in society where we should not be to care for her, and she would be driven wretchedly to and fro in a hard, cold world? Describe to me any situation in which Ottilie, without me, without us, could be happy, and you will then have employed an argument which will be stronger than every other; and if I will not promise to yield to it, if I will not undertake at once to give up all my own hopes, I will at least reconsider the question, and see how what you have said will affect it."

This problem was not so easy to solve; at least, no satisfactory answer to it suggested itself to his friend: and nothing was left him except to insist again and again how grave and serious, and in many senses how dangerous, the whole undertaking was; and at least that they ought maturely to consider how they had better enter upon it. Edward agreed to this, and con-

sented to wait before he took any steps, but only under the condition that his friend should not leave him until they had come to a perfect understanding about it, and until the first measures had been taken.

CHAPTER XIII.

PEOPLE who are complete strangers and wholly indifferent to one another, are sure, if they live a long time together, to expose something of their inner nature; and thus a certain intimacy will arise. All the more was it to be expected that there would soon be no secrets between our two friends, now that they were again under the same roof together, and in daily and hourly intercourse. They recalled the earlier stages of their history; and the major confessed to Edward that Charlotte had intended Ottilie for him at the time at which he returned from abroad, and hoped that sometime or other he might marry her. Edward was in ecstasies at this discovery: he spoke without reserve of the mutual affection of Charlotte and the major, which, because it happened to fall in so conveniently with his own wishes, he painted in very lively colours.

Deny it altogether, the major could not; at the same time, he could not altogether acknowledge it. But Edward insisted on it only the more. He had pictured the whole thing to himself, not as possible, but as already concluded; all parties had only to resolve on what they all wished; there would be no difficulty in obtaining a separation; the marriages should follow as soon after as possible, and Edward could travel with Ottilie.

Of all the pleasant things imagination pictures to us, there is, perhaps, none more charming than when lovers and young married people look forward to en-

joying their new relation they have formed, in a fresh, new world, and test the endurance of the bond between them in so many changing circumstances. The major and Charlotte were, in the meantime, to have unrestricted powers to settle all questions of money, property, and other such important worldly matters, and to do whatever was right and proper for the satisfaction of all parties. What Edward dwelt the most upon, however, from what he seemed to promise himself the most advantage, was this: as the child would have to remain with the mother, the major would charge himself with his education; he would train the boy according to his own views, and develop what capacities there might be in him. It was not for nothing that he had received in his baptism the name of Otto, which belonged to them both.

Edward had so completely arranged everything for himself, that he could not wait another day to carry it into execution. On their way to the castle, they arrived at a small town, where Edward had a house, and where he was to stay to await the major's return. He could not, however, prevail upon himself to alight there at once, and accompanied his friend through the place. They were both on horseback, and, falling into some interesting conversation, rode on farther together.

On a sudden they saw, in the distance, the new house on the height, with its red tiles shining in the sun. An irresistible longing came over Edward: he would have it all settled that very evening; he would remain concealed in a village close by. The major was to urge the business on Charlotte with all his power: he would take her prudence by surprise, and oblige her, by the unexpectedness of his proposal, to make a free acknowledgment of her feelings. Edward had transferred his own wishes to her: he felt certain that he was only meeting her half-way, and that her inclination was as decided as his own; and he looked

for an immediate consent from her, because he himself could think of nothing else.

Joyfully he saw before his eyes the happy result; and, that it might be communicated to him as swiftly as possible, a few cannon-shots were to be fired off, or, if it were dark, a rocket or two to be sent up.

The major rode to the castle. He did not find Charlotte there; he learned, that for the present she was staying at the new house: at that particular time, however, she was paying a visit in the neighbourhood, and she probably would not return till late that evening. He walked back to the inn, to which he had previously sent his horse.

Edward, in the meantime, unable to sit still from restlessness and impatience, stole away out of his concealment along solitary paths only known to foresters and fishermen, into his park; and he found himself toward evening in the copse close to the lake, the broad mirror of which he now for the first time saw spread out in its perfectness before him.

Ottilie had gone out that afternoon for a walk along the shore. She had the child with her, and read as she usually did while she went along. She had gone as far as the oak-tree by the ferry. The boy had fallen asleep: she sat down, laid it on the ground at her side, and continued reading. The book was one of those which attract persons of delicate feeling, and afterward will not let them go again. She completely forgot the time, nor remembered what a long way round it was by land to the new house; but she sat lost in her book and in herself, so beautiful to look at, that the trees and the bushes round her ought to have been alive, and endowed with eyes to admire, and take delight in gazing upon her. The sun was sinking: a ruddy streak of light fell upon her from behind, tinging with gold her cheek and shoulder. Edward, who had made his way to the lake without being seen, finding

his park deserted, and seeing no trace of a human creature anywhere round about, went on and on. At last he broke through the copse behind the oak-tree, and saw her. At the same moment she saw him. He rushed up to her, and threw himself at her feet. After a long, silent pause, in which they both endeavoured to collect themselves, he explained in a few words why and how he had come there. He had sent the major to Charlotte, and perhaps at that moment their common destiny was being decided. Never had he doubted her affection, and she assuredly had never doubted his. He begged for her consent; she hesitated; he implored her. He offered to resume his old privilege, and throw his arms around her, and embrace her: she pointed down to the child.

Edward looked at it, and was amazed. "Great God!" he cried: "if I had cause to doubt my wife and my friend, this face would bear fearful witness against them. Is not this the very image of the major? I never saw such a likeness."

"Indeed!" replied Ottilie: "all the world say it is like me."

"Is it possible?" Edward answered; and at the moment the child opened its eyes, — two large, black, piercing eyes, deep, and full of love: already the little face was full of intelligence. He seemed to know the two that were standing before him. Edward threw himself down beside the child, and then knelt a second time before Ottilie. "It is you," he cried: "the eyes are yours! ah, but let me look into yours! let me throw a veil over that ill-starred hour which gave its being to this little creature. Shall I shock your pure spirit with the fearful thought that man and wife who are estranged from each other can yet press each other to their heart, and profane the bonds by which the law unites them by other eager wishes? Oh, yes! As I have said so much; as my connection with Char-

lotte must now be severed; as you will be mine,— why should I not speak out the words to you? This child is the offspring of a double adultery. It should have been a tie between my wife and myself; but it severs her from me, and me from her. Let it witness, then, against me. Let these fair eyes say to yours, that in the arms of another I belonged to you. You must feel, Ottilie, oh! you must feel, that my fault, my crime, I can only expiate in your arms."

"Hark!" he called out, springing to his feet, and thinking he had heard the report of a gun, and that it was the sign the major was to give. It was the gun of a forester on the adjoining hill. Nothing followed. Edward grew impatient.

Ottilie now first observed that the sun was down behind the mountains: its last rays were shining on the windows of the house above. "Leave me, Edward," she cried: "go. Long as we have been parted, much as we have borne, yet remember what we both owe to Charlotte. She must decide our fate: do not let us anticipate her judgment. I am yours if she will permit it to be so: if not, I must renounce you. As you think it is now so near an issue, let us wait. Go back to the village, where the major supposes you to be. Is it likely that a rude cannon-shot will inform you of the results of such an interview? Perhaps at this moment he is seeking for you. He will not have found Charlotte at home: of that I am certain. He may have gone to meet her, for they knew at the castle where she was. How many things may have happened! Leave me! she must be at home by this time: she is expecting me with the baby above."

Ottilie spoke hurriedly: she called together all the possibilities. It was too delightful to be with Edward, but she felt that he must now leave her. "I beseech, I implore you, my beloved," she cried out, "go back and wait for the major."

"I obey your commands," cried Edward. He gazed at her for a moment with rapturous love, and then caught her close in his arms. She wound her own about him, and pressed him tenderly to her breast. Hope rushed off, like a star shooting along the sky over their heads. They then thought, they believed, that they did indeed belong to one another. For the first time they exchanged free, unrestrained kisses, and separated with pain and effort.

The sun had gone down. It was twilight, and a damp mist was rising about the lake. Ottilie stood confused and agitated. She looked across to the house on the hill, and thought she saw Charlotte's white dress on the balcony. It was a long way round by the end of the lake, and she knew how impatiently Charlotte would be waiting for the child. She saw the plane-trees just opposite her, and only a narrow interval of water divided her from the path which led straight up to the house. Her nervousness about venturing on the water with the child vanished in her present embarrassment. She hastened to the boat: she did not feel that her heart was throbbing, that her feet were tottering, that her senses were threatening to fail her.

She jumped in, seized the oar, and pushed off. She had to use force: she pushed again. The boat shot off, and glided, swaying and rocking, into the open water. With the child on her left arm, the book in her left hand, and the oar in her right, she lost her footing, and fell over the seat: the oar slipped from her on one side; and, as she tried to recover herself, the child and the book slipped on the other, all into the water. She caught the floating dress; but, lying entangled as she was herself, she was unable to rise. Her right hand was free, but she could not reach round to help herself up with it: at last she succeeded. She drew the child out of the water; but its eyes were closed, and it had ceased to breathe.

In a moment she recovered all her self-possession, but so much the greater was her agony: the boat was driving fast into the middle of the lake, the oar was swimming far away from her. She saw no one on the shore; and, indeed, if she had, it would have been of no service to her. Cut off from all assistance, she was floating on the faithless, unstable element.

She sought help from herself: she had often heard of the recovery of the drowned; she had herself witnessed an instance of it on the evening of her birthday; she took off the child's clothes, and dried it with her muslin dress. She threw open her bosom, laying it bare for the first time to the open sky. For the first time she pressed a living being to her pure, naked breast. Alas! and it was not a living being. The cold limbs of the ill-starred little creature chilled her to the heart. Streams of tears gushed from her eyes, and lent a show of life and warmth to the outside of the torpid limbs. She persevered with her efforts, wrapped the child in her shawl, drew him close to her, stroked him, breathed on him, and with tears and kisses laboured to supply the help which, cut off as she was, she was unable to find.

It was all in vain: the child lay motionless in her arms, motionless the boat floated on the glassy water. But even here her beautiful spirit did not leave her forsaken. She turned to the Power above. She sank down upon her knees in the boat, and with both arms raised the motionless child above her innocent breast, like marble in its whiteness; alas! too like marble, cold; with moist eyes she looked up and cried for help, where a tender heart hopes to find it in its fulness, when all other help has failed.

The stars were beginning one by one to glimmer down upon her; she turned to them, and not in vain: a soft air stole over the surface, and wafted the boat under the plane-trees.

CHAPTER XIV.

SHE hurried to the new house, and called the surgeon, and gave the child into his hands. It was at once carried to Charlotte's bedroom. Cool and collected from a wide experience, he submitted the tender body to the usual process. Ottilie aided him through it all. She prepared everything, fetched everything, but as if she were moving in another world; for the height of misfortune, like the height of happiness, alters the aspect of every object. And it was only when, after every resource had been exhausted, the good man shook his head, and, to her questions whether there was hope, first was silent, and then softly answered No! that she left the apartment, and had scarcely entered the sitting-room, when she fell fainting, with her face upon the carpet, unable to reach the sofa.

At that moment Charlotte was heard driving up. The surgeon implored the servants to keep back, and allow him to go to meet her and prepare her. But he was too late: while he was speaking, she had entered the drawing-room. She found Ottilie on the ground, and one of the girls of the house came running and screaming to her open-mouthed. The surgeon entered at the same moment, and she was informed of everything. She could not at once, however, give up all hope. She was rushing up-stairs to the child, but the physician besought her to remain where she was. He went himself, to deceive her with a show of fresh exertions; and she sat down upon the sofa. Ottilie was

still lying on the ground: Charlotte raised her, and supported her against herself; and her beautiful head sank down upon her knee. Her medical friend went to and fro; he appeared to be busy about the child; his real care was for the ladies: and so came on midnight, and the stillness of death grew deeper and deeper. Charlotte did not try to conceal from herself any longer that her child would never return to life again. She desired to see it now. It had been wrapped up in warm woollen coverings. And it was brought down as it was, lying in its cot, which was placed at her side on the sofa. The little face was uncovered; and there it lay in its calm, sweet beauty.

The report of the accident soon spread through the village: every one was roused, and the story reached the hotel. The major hurried up the well-known road; he went round and round the house; at last he met a servant who was going to one of the out-buildings to fetch something. He learned from him the state of things, and desired him to tell the surgeon that he was there. The latter came out, not a little surprised at the appearance of his old patron. He told him exactly what had happened, and undertook to prepare Charlotte to see him. He then went in, began some conversation to draw her attention to other matters, and led her imagination from one object to another, till at last he brought it to rest upon her friend, and the depth of feeling and of sympathy which would surely be called out in him. From the imaginative she was brought at once to the real. Enough! she was informed that he was at the door, that he knew everything, and desired to be admitted.

The major entered. Charlotte received him with a miserable smile. He stood before her: she lifted off the green silk covering under which the body was lying; and by the dim light of a taper he saw before

him, not without a secret shudder, the stiffened image of himself. Charlotte pointed to a chair; and there they sat opposite to one another, without speaking, through the night. Ottilie was still lying motionless on Charlotte's knee: she breathed softly, and slept, or seemed to sleep.

The morning dawned, the lights went out: the two friends appeared to awake out of a heavy dream. Charlotte looked toward the major, and said quietly, "Tell me through what circumstances you have been brought hither, to take part in this mournful scene."

"The present is not a time," the major answered, in the same low tone as that in which Charlotte had spoken, for fear lest she might disturb Ottilie, "this is not a time, and this is not a place, for reserve. The condition in which I find you is so fearful that even the earnest matter on which I am here loses its importance by the side of it." He then informed her, quite calmly and simply, of the object of his mission in so far as he was the ambassador of Edward, of the object of his coming in so far as his own free will and his own interests were concerned in it. He laid both before her delicately but uprightly: Charlotte listened quietly, and showed neither surprise nor unwillingness.

As soon as the major had finished, she replied, in so low a voice, that, to catch her words, he was obliged to draw his chair closer to her, "In such a case as this I have never before found myself; but in similar cases I have always said to myself, 'How will it be tomorrow?' I am fully aware that the fate of many persons is now in my hands, and what I have to do is soon said without scruple or hesitation. I consent to the separation; I ought to have made up my mind to it before: by my unwillingness and reluctance I have destroyed my child. There are certain things on which destiny obstinately insists. In vain may rea-

son, virtue, duty, every sacred feeling, place themselves in its way. Something shall be done which to it seems good, and which to us seems not good; and it forces its own way through at last, let us conduct ourselves as we will.

"But what am I saying? It is but my own desire, my own purpose, against which I acted so unthinkingly, which destiny is again bringing in my way. Did I not long ago, in my thoughts, design Edward and Ottilie for one another? Did I not myself labour to bring them together? And you, my friend, you yourself were an accomplice in my plot. Why, why could I not distinguish mere man's obstinacy from real love? Why did I accept his hand, when I could have made him happy as a friend, and when another could have made him happy as a wife? And now look here on this unhappy slumberer. I tremble at the moment when she will wake from her deathlike sleep into consciousness. How can she endure to live? How shall she ever console herself, if she may not hope to make good that to Edward of which, as the instrument of the most wonderful destiny, she has deprived him? And she can make it all good again by the passion, by the devotion, with which she loves him. If love be able to bear all things, it is able to do yet more: it can restore all things. Of myself at such a moment I may not think.

"Do you go quietly away, my dear major: say to Edward that I consent to the separation, that I leave it to him, to you, and to Mittler to settle whatever is to be done. I have no anxiety for my own future condition: it may be what it will; it is nothing to me. I will subscribe whatever paper is submitted to me, only he must not require me to join actively. I cannot have to think about it or give advice."

The major rose to go. She stretched out her hand to him across Ottilie. He pressed it to his lips, and

whispered gently, "And for myself, may I hope anything?"

"Do not ask me now," replied Charlotte. "I will tell you another time. We have not deserved to be miserable, but neither can we say that we have deserved to be happy together."

The major left her, and went, feeling for Charlotte to the bottom of his heart, but not being able to be sorry for the fate of the poor child. Such an offering seemed necessary to him for their general happiness. He pictured Ottilie to himself with a child of her own in her arms, as the most perfect compensation for the one of which she had deprived Edward. He pictured himself with his own son on his knee, who should have better right to resemble him than the one which was departed.

With such flattering hopes and fancies passing through his mind, he returned to the inn; and, on his way back, he met Edward, who had been waiting for him the whole night through in the open air, since neither rocket nor report of cannon would bring him news of the successful issue of his undertaking. He had already heard of the misfortune; and he too, instead of being sorry for the poor thing, regarded what had befallen it, without being exactly ready to confess it to himself, as a convenient accident, through which the only impediment in the way of his happiness was at once removed.

The major at once informed him of his wife's resolution; and he therefore easily allowed himself to be prevailed upon to return again with him to the village, and from thence to go for awhile to the little town, where they would consider what was next to be done, and make their arrangements.

After the major had left her, Charlotte sat on, buried in her own reflections; but it was only for a few minutes. Ottilie suddenly raised herself from her lap,

and looked full, with her large eyes, in her friend's face. Then she got up from the ground, and stood upright before her.

"This is the second time," began the noble girl with an irresistible solemnity of manner, "this is the second time the same thing has happened to me. You once said to me that things of the same kind often happen to people in their lives in the same kind of way; and, if they do, it is always at important moments. I now find that what you said is true, and I have to make a confession to you. Shortly after my mother's death, when I was a very little child, I was sitting one day on a footstool, close to you. You were on the sofa, as you are at this moment; and my head rested on your knees. I was not asleep, I was not awake: I was in a trance. I knew everything which was passing about me. I heard every word which was said, with the greatest distinctness: and yet I could not stir, I could not speak; and, if I had wished it, I could not have given a hint that I was conscious. On that occasion you were speaking about me to one of your friends: you were commiserating my fate, left, as I was, a poor orphan in the world. You described my dependent position, and how unfortunate a future was before me, unless some very happy star watched over me. I understood well what you said. I saw, perhaps too clearly, what you appeared to hope of me, and what you thought I ought to do. I made rules to myself, according to such limited insight as I had: and by these I have long lived; by these, at the time when you so kindly took charge of me, and had me with you in your house, I regulated whatever I did, and whatever I left undone.

"But I have strayed from my course; I have broken my rules; I have lost the very power of feeling them. And now, after a dreadful occurrence, you have again made clear to me my situation, which is more pitiable

than the first. While lying in a half-torpor on your lap, I have again, as if out of another world, heard every syllable which you uttered. I know from you how all is with me. The thought of myself makes me shudder; but again, as I did then, in my half-sleep of death, I have marked out my new path for myself.

"I am determined, as I was before; and what I have determined I must tell you at once. I will never be Edward's wife. In a terrible manner God has opened my eyes to see the sin in which I was entangled. I will atone for it, and let no one think to move me from my purpose. It is by this, my dearest, kindest friend, that you must govern your own conduct. Send for the major to come back to you. Write to him that no steps must be taken. It made me miserable that I could not stir or speak when he went: I tried to rise, I tried to cry out. Oh, why did you let him go from you with such sinful hopes!"

Charlotte saw Ottilie's condition, and she felt for it; but she hoped, that, by time and persuasion, she might be able to prevail upon her. On her uttering a few words, however, which pointed to a future, to a time when her sufferings would be alleviated, and when there might be better room for hope, "No!" Ottilie cried with vehemence, "do not endeavour to move me: do not seek to deceive me. At the moment at which I learn that you have consented to the separation, I will expiate my trespass, my crime, in that same lake."

CHAPTER XV.

FRIENDS and relations, and all persons living together in the same house, are apt, when life is going smoothly and peacefully with them, to make what they are doing, or what they are going to do, even more than is right or necessary, a subject of constant conversation. They talk to each other of their plans and their occupations, and, without exactly taking one another's advice, consider and discuss together the entire progress of their lives. But this is far from being the case in serious moments: just when it would seem men most require the assistance and support of others, every one withdraws singly within themselves, every one to act for himself, every one to work in his own fashion; they conceal from one another the particular means they employ; and only the result, the object, the thing they realise is again made common property.

After so many strange and unfortunate incidents, a sort of silent seriousness had passed over the two ladies, which showed itself in a sweet mutual effort to spare each other's feelings. The child had been buried privately in the chapel. It rested there as the first offering to a destiny full of ominous foreshadowings.

Charlotte, as much as she could, turned back to life and occupation; and here she first found Ottilie standing in need of her assistance. She occupied herself almost entirely with her, without letting it be observed. She knew how deeply the noble girl loved Edward. She had discovered by degrees the scene which had

preceded the accident, and had gathered every circumstance of it, partly from Ottilie herself, partly from the letters of the major.

Ottilie, on her side, made Charlotte's immediate life much more easy for her. She was open and even talkative; but she never spoke of the present, or of what had lately passed. She had been a close and thoughtful observer. She knew much, and now it all came to the surface. She entertained, she amused, Charlotte; and the latter still nourished a hope in secret to see her married to Edward after all.

But something very different was passing in Ottilie. She had disclosed the secret of the course of her life to her friend, and she showed no more of her previous restraint and submissiveness. By her repentance and resolution she felt herself freed from the burden of her fault and her misfortune. She had no more violence to do to herself. In the bottom of her heart she had forgiven herself solely under condition of the fullest renunciation, and it was a condition which would remain binding for all time to come.

So passed away some time; and Charlotte now felt how much house and park, and lake and rocks and trees, served to keep alive in them all their most painful reminiscences. That change of scene was necessary was plain enough, but how it was to be effected was not so easy to decide.

Were the two ladies to remain together? Edward's previously expressed will appeared to enjoin it, his declarations and his threats appeared to make it necessary: only it could not be now mistaken that Charlotte and Ottilie, with all their good-will, with all their sense, with all their efforts to conceal it, could not avoid finding themselves in a painful situation toward one another. Their conversation was guarded. They were often obliged only half to understand some allusion: more often, expressions were misinterpreted, if

not by their understandings, at any rate by their feelings. They were afraid to give pain to one another, and this very fear itself produced the evil which they were seeking to avoid.

If they were to try change of scene, and at the same time (at any rate for awhile) to part, the old question came up again, Where was Ottilie to go? There was the grand, rich family, who still wanted a desirable companion for their daughter, their attempts to find a person whom they could trust having hitherto proved ineffectual. Already during her last sojourn at the castle, the baroness had urged Charlotte to send Ottilie there, and lately again in her letters. Charlotte now a second time proposed it; but Ottilie expressly declined going anywhere, where she would be thrown into what is called the great world.

"Do not think me narrow or self-willed, my dear aunt," she said: "let me utter what, in any other case, it would be my duty to conceal. A person who has fallen into uncommon misfortunes, however guiltless he may be, carries a frightful mark upon him. His presence, in every one who sees him and is aware of his history, excites a kind of horror. People see in him the terrible fate which has been laid upon him, and he is the object of a diseased and nervous curiosity. It is so with a house, it is so with a town, where any terrible action has been done: people enter them with awe; the light of day shines less brightly there, and the stars seem to lose their lustre.

"Perhaps we ought to excuse it, but how extreme is the indiscretion with which people behave toward such unfortunate persons with their foolish importunities and awkward kindness! Pardon me for speaking in this way; but that poor girl whom Luciana tempted out of her retirement, and with such mistaken goodnature tried to force into society and amusement, has haunted me and made me miserable. The poor crea-

ture, when she was so frightened and tried to escape, and then sank and swooned away, and I caught her in my arms, and the party came all crowding round in terror and curiosity, — little did I think, then, that the same fate was in store for me. But my feeling for her is as deep and warm and fresh as ever it was; and now I may direct my compassion upon myself, and secure myself from being the object of any similar exposure."

"But, my dear child," answered Charlotte, "you will never be able to withdraw yourself where no one can see you: we have no cloisters now; otherwise, there, with your present feelings, would be your resource."

"Solitude would not give me the resource for which I wish, my dear aunt," answered Ottilie. "The one true and valuable resource is to be looked for where we can be active and useful: all the self-denials and all the penances on earth will fail to deliver us from an evil-omened destiny if it be determined to persecute us. Let me sit still in idleness, and serve as a spectacle for the world, and it will overpower and crush me. But find me some peaceful employment, where I can go steadily and unweariedly on doing my duty, and I shall be able to bear the eyes of men when I need not shrink under the eyes of God."

"Unless I am much mistaken," replied Charlotte, "your inclination is, to return to the school."

"Yes," Ottilie answered: "I do not deny it. I think it a happy destination to train up others in the beaten way, after having been trained in the strangest myself. And do we not see the same great fact in history? Some moral calamity drives men out into the wilderness; but they are not allowed to remain, as they had hoped, in their concealment there. They are summoned back into the world, to lead the wanderers into the right way; and who are fitter for such a service than those who have been initiated into the

labyrinths of life? They are commanded to be the support of the unfortunate; and who can better fulfil that command than those who have no more misfortunes to fear upon earth?"

"You are selecting an uncommon profession for yourself," replied Charlotte. "I shall not oppose you, however. Let it be as you wish, only I hope it will be but for a short time."

"Most warmly do I thank you," said Ottilie, "for giving me leave to try to gain this experiment. If I am not flattering myself too highly, I am sure I shall succeed: wherever I am, I shall remember the many trials which I went through myself, and how small, how infinitely small, they were compared to those which I afterward had to undergo. It will be my happiness to watch the embarrassments of the little creatures as they grow; to cheer them in their childish sorrows, and guide them back, with a light hand, out of their little aberrations. The fortunate is not the person to be of help to the fortunate: it is in the nature of man to require ever more and more of himself and others, the more he has received. The unfortunate only recover, while knowing, from their affliction, how to foster, both in themselves and others, the feeling that every moderate good ought to be enjoyed with rapture."

"I have but one objection to make to what you propose," said Charlotte, after some thought, "although that one seems to me of great importance. I am not thinking of you, but of another person: you well know how that good, right-minded, excellent assistant is disposed toward you. In the way in which you desire to proceed, you will become every day more valuable and more indispensable to him. Already he himself believes that he can never live happily without you; and hereafter, when he has become accustomed to have you to work with him, he will be unable to carry on

his business if he loses you: you will have assisted him at the beginning, only to injure him in the end."

"Destiny has not dealt with me gently," replied Ottilie; "and whoever loves me has, perhaps, not much better to expect. Our friend is so good and so sensible, that I hope he will be able to reconcile himself to remaining in a simple relation with me: he will learn to see in me a consecrated person, lying under the shadow of an awful calamity, and only able to support herself, and bear up against it, by devoting herself to that Holy Being who is invisibly around us, and alone is able to shield us from the dark powers which threaten to overwhelm us."

Charlotte privately reflected on all the dear girl had so warmly uttered: on many different occasions, although only in the gentlest manner, she had hinted at the possibility of Ottilie's being brought again in contact with Edward; but the slightest mention of it, the faintest hope, the least suspicion, seemed to wound Ottilie to the quick. One day, when she could not evade it, she expressed herself to Charlotte clearly on the subject.

"If your resolution to renounce Edward," returned Charlotte, "is so firm and unalterable, then you had better avoid the danger of seeing him again. At a distance from the object of our love, the warmer our affection, the stronger is the control which we fancy that we can exercise on ourselves; because the whole force of the passion, diverted from its outward objects, turns inward on ourselves. But how soon, how swiftly is our mistake made plain to us, when the thing we thought we could renounce stands again before our eyes as indispensable to us! You must now do what you consider best suited to your circumstances. Look well into yourself: change, if you prefer it, the resolution which you have just expressed. But do it of yourself, with a free-consenting heart

Do not allow yourself to be drawn in by an accident: do not let yourself be surprised into your former position. It will place you at issue with yourself, and will be intolerable to you. As I said, before you take this step, before you remove from me, and enter upon a new life, which will lead you no one knows in what direction, consider once more whether really, indeed, you can renounce Edward for the whole time to come. If you have faithfully made up your mind that you will do this, then will you enter into an engagement with me, that you will never admit him into your presence, and, if he seeks you out, and forces himself upon you, that you will not exchange words with him?"

Ottilie did not hesitate a moment: she gave Charlotte the promise, which she had already made to herself.

Now, however, Charlotte began to be haunted with Edward's threat, that he would only consent to renounce Ottilie as long as she was not parted from Charlotte. Since that time, indeed, circumstances were so altered, so many things had happened, that an engagement which was wrung from him in a moment of excitement might well be supposed to have been cancelled. She was unwilling, however, in the remotest sense, to venture anything, or to undertake anything, which might displease him; and Mittler was therefore to find Edward, and inquire what, as things now were, he wished to be done.

Since the death of the child, Mittler had often been at the castle to see Charlotte, although only for a few moments at a time. The unhappy accident, which had made her reconciliation with her husband in the highest degree improbable, had produced a most painful effect upon him. But ever, as his nature was, hoping and striving, he rejoiced secretly at the resolution of Ottilie. He trusted to the softening influence

of passing time; he hoped that it might still be possible to keep the husband and the wife from separating; and he tried to regard these convulsions of passion only as trials of wedded love and fidelity.

Charlotte, at the very first, had informed the major by letter of Ottilie's declaration. She had entreated him most earnestly to prevail on Edward to take no further steps for the present. They should keep quiet, and wait, and see whether the poor girl would recover her spirits. She had let him know from time to time whatever was necessary of what had more lately fallen from her. And now Mittler had to undertake the really difficult commission of preparing Edward for an alteration in her situation. Mittler, however, well knowing that men can be brought more easily to submit to what is already done than to give their consent to what is yet to be done, persuaded Charlotte that it would be better to send Ottilie off at once to the school.

Consequently, as soon as Mittler was gone, preparations were at once made for the journey. Ottilie put her things together; and Charlotte observed that neither the beautiful box, nor anything out of it, was to go with her. Ottilie had said nothing to her on the subject; and she took no notice, but let her alone. The day of departure came: Charlotte's carriage was to take Ottilie the first day as far as a place where they were well known, where she was to pass the night; and on the second she would go on in it to the school. It was settled that Nanny was to accompany her, and remain as her attendant.

This capricious little creature had found her way back to her mistress after the death of the child, and now hung about her as warmly and passionately as ever: indeed, she seemed, with her loquacity and attentiveness, as if she wished to make good her past neglect, and henceforth devote herself entirely to

Ottilie's service. She was quite beside herself now for joy at the thought of travelling with her, and of seeing strange places, when she had hitherto never been away from the scene of her birth; and she ran from the castle to the village to carry the news of her good fortune to her parents and her relations, and to take leave. Unluckily for herself, she went among other places into a room where a person was who had the measles, and caught the infection, which came out upon her at once. The journey could not be postponed. Ottilie herself was urgent to go. She had travelled once already the same road. She knew the people of the hotel where she was to sleep. The coachman from the castle was going with her. There could be nothing to fear.

Charlotte made no opposition. She, too, in thought, was making haste to be clear of present embarrassments. The rooms Ottilie had occupied at the castle she would have prepared for Edward as soon as possible, and restored to the state in which they had been before the arrival of the captain. The hope of bringing back old happy days burns up again and again in us, as if it never could be extinguished. And Charlotte was quite right: there was nothing else for her, except to hope as she did.

CHAPTER XVI.

When Mittler was come to talk with Edward about the matter, he found him sitting by himself, with his head supported on his right hand, and his arm resting on the table. He appeared in great suffering.

"Is your headache troubling you again?" asked Mittler.

"It is troubling me," answered he; "and yet I cannot wish it were not so, for it reminds me of Ottilie. She, too, I say to myself, is also suffering in the same way at this same moment, and suffering more perhaps than I; and why cannot I bear it as well as she? These pains are good for me. I might almost say that they were welcome; for they serve to bring out before me, with the greater vividness, her patience and all her other graces. It is only when we suffer ourselves, that we feel really the true nature of all the high qualities which are required to bear suffering."

Mittler, finding his friend so far resigned, did not hesitate to communicate the message with which he had been sent. He brought it out piecemeal, however, in order of time, as the idea had itself arisen between the ladies, and had gradually ripened into a purpose. Edward scarcely made an objection. From the little which he said, it appeared as if he was willing to leave everything to them; the pain which he was suffering at the moment making him indifferent to all besides.

Scarcely, however, was he again alone, than he got up and walked rapidly up and down the room: he forgot his pain, his attention now turning to what was

external to himself. Mittler's story had stirred the embers of his love, and awakened his imagination in all its vividness. He saw Ottilie by herself, or as good as by herself, travelling on a road which was well known to him, — in a hotel with every room of which he was familiar. He thought, he considered, or rather he neither thought nor considered: he only wished, he only desired. He would see her: he would speak to her. Why, or for what good end that was to come of it, he did not care to ask himself; but he made up his mind at once. He must do it.

He summoned his valet into his council, and through him he made himself acquainted with the day and hour when Ottilie was to set out. The morning broke. Without taking any person with him, Edward mounted his horse, and rode off to the place where she was to pass the night. He was there too soon. The hostess was overjoyed at the sight of him: she was under heavy obligations to him for a service which he had been able to do for her. Her son had been in the army, where he had conducted himself with remarkable gallantry. He had performed one particular action of which no one had been a witness but Edward; and the latter had spoken of it to the commander-in-chief in terms of such high praise, that, notwithstanding the opposition of various ill-wishers, he had obtained a decoration for him. The mother, therefore, could never do enough for Edward. She got ready her best room for him, which indeed was her own wardrobe and storeroom, with all possible speed. He informed her, however, that a young lady was coming to pass the night there; and he ordered an apartment for her at the back, at the end of the gallery. It sounded a mysterious sort of affair; but the hostess was ready to do anything to please her patron, who appeared so interested and so busy about it. And he, what were his sensations as he watched through the long, weary hours

till evening? He examined the room round and round in which he was to see her: with all its strangeness and homeliness it seemed to him to be an abode for angels. He again and again turned over in his mind what he had better do: was he to take her by surprise, or whether to prepare her for meeting him. At last the second course seemed the preferable one. He sat down and wrote a letter, which she was to read.

EDWARD TO OTTILIE.

"While you read this letter, my best beloved, I am close to you. Do not agitate yourself; do not be alarmed: you have nothing to fear from me. I will not force myself upon you. I will see you or not, as you yourself shall choose.

"Consider, oh consider, your condition and mine! How much I thank you, that you have taken no decisive step! But the step which you have taken is important enough. Do not persist in it. Here, as it were, at a parting of the ways, reflect once again. Can you be mine? Will you be mine? Oh, you will be showing mercy on us all if you will; and on me infinite mercy!

"Let me see you again! — happily, joyfully see you once more! Let me make my request to you with my own lips; and do you give me your answer your own beautiful self, on my breast, Ottilie, where you have so often rested, and which belongs to you for ever!"

As he was writing, the feeling rushed over him that what he was longing for was coming, was close, would be there almost immediately. By that door she would come in; she would read that letter; she, in her own person, would stand there before him as she used to stand, — she, for whose appearance he had thirsted so long. Would she be the same as she was? Was her

form, were her feelings, changed? He still held the pen in his hand: he was going to write, as he thought, when the carriage rolled into the court. With a few hurried strokes he added, "I hear you coming. For a moment, farewell!"

He folded the letter, and directed it. He had no time for sealing. He darted into the room, through which there was a second outlet into the gallery; when the next moment he recollected that he had left his watch and seals lying on the table. She must not see these first. He ran back and brought them away with him. At the same instant he heard the hostess in the antechamber showing Ottilie the way to her apartments. He hastened to the bedroom-door, but it had suddenly shut. In his hurry, as he had come back for his watch, he had forgotten to take out the key, which had fallen out, and was lying inside. The door had closed with a spring, and he could not open it. He pushed at it with all his might, but it would not yield. Oh, how gladly would he have been a spirit, to escape through its cracks! In vain. He hid his face against the panels. Ottilie entered; and the hostess, seeing him, retired. From Ottilie herself, too, he could not remain concealed for a moment. He turned toward her; and there stood the lovers once more, in such strange fashion, in one another's presence. She looked at him calmly and earnestly, without advancing or retiring. He made a movement to approach her, and she withdrew a few steps toward the table. He stepped back again. "Ottilie!" he cried aloud, "Ottilie! let me break this frightful silence! Are we shadows, that we stand thus gazing at each other? Only listen to me: listen to this at least. It is an accident that you find me here thus. There is a letter on the table, at your side there, which was to have prepared you. Read it, I implore you: read it, and then determine as you will!"

She looked down at the letter; and, after thinking a few seconds, took it up, opened and read it. She finished it without a change of expression, and she gently laid it aside; then, pressing together the palms of her hands, raising them, and drawing them against her breast, she leaned her body a little forward, and regarded Edward with such a look, that, urgent as he was, he was compelled to renounce everything he wished or desired of her. Such an attitude cut him to the heart: he could not bear it. It seemed exactly as if she would fall upon her knees before him, if he persisted. He hurried in despair out of the room, and, leaving her alone, sent the hostess in to her.

He walked up and down the antechamber. Night had come on, and there was no sound in the room. At last the hostess came out, and drew the key out of the lock. The good woman was embarrassed and agitated, not knowing what it would be proper for her to do. At last, as she turned to go, she offered the key to Edward, who refused it; and, putting down the candle, she went away.

In misery and wretchedness, Edward flung himself down on the threshold of the door which divided him from Ottilie, moistening it with his tears as he lay. A more unhappy night had been seldom passed by two lovers in such close neighbourhood.

Day came at last. The coachman brought round the carriage; and the hostess unlocked the door, and went in. Ottilie was asleep in her clothes: she went back, and beckoned to Edward with a significant smile. They both entered, and stood before her as she lay; but the sight was too much for Edward. He could not bear it. She was sleeping so quietly that the hostess did not like to disturb her, but sat down opposite her, waiting till she woke. At last Ottilie opened her beautiful eyes, and raised herself on her feet. She declined taking any breakfast; and then Edward went in again,

and stood before her. He entreated her to speak but one word to him, to tell him what she desired. He would do it, be it what it would, he swore to her; but she remained silent. He asked her once more, passionately and tenderly, whether she would be his. With downcast eyes, and with the deepest tenderness of manner, she shook her head to a gentle "No." He asked if she still desired to go to the school. Without any show of feeling, she declined. Would she, then, go back to Charlotte? She inclined her head in token of assent, with a look of comfort and relief. He went to the window to give directions to the coachman; and, when his back was turned, she darted like lightning out of the room, and was down the stairs and in the carriage in an instant. The coachman drove back along the road which he had come the day before, and Edward followed at some distance on horseback.

CHAPTER XVII.

It was with the utmost surprise that Charlotte saw the carriage drive up with Ottilie, and Edward at the same moment ride into the courtyard of the castle. She ran down to the hall. Ottilie alighted, and approached her and Edward. Violently and eagerly she seized the hands of the wife and husband, pressed them together, and hurried off to her own room. Edward threw himself on Charlotte's neck, and burst into tears. He could not give her any explanation: he besought her to have patience with him, and to go at once to see Ottilie. Charlotte followed her to her room, and she could not enter it without a shudder. It had been all cleared out. There was nothing to be seen but the empty walls, which stood there looking cheerless, vacant, and miserable. Everything had been carried away except the little box, which, from an uncertainty what was to be done with it, had been left in the middle of the room. Ottilie was lying stretched upon the ground, her arm and head leaning across the cover. Charlotte bent anxiously over her, and asked what had happened; but she received no answer.

Her maid had come with restoratives. Charlotte left her with Ottilie, and herself hastened back to Edward. She found him in the saloon, but he could tell her nothing. He threw himself down before her, bathed her hands with tears, then fled to his own room: she was going to follow him thither, when she met his valet. From this man she gathered as much as he was able to tell. The rest she put together in her

own thoughts as well as she could, and then at once set herself resolutely to do what the exigencies of the moment required. Ottilie's room was put to rights again as quickly as possible: Edward found his, to the last paper, exactly as he had left it.

The three appeared again to fall into some sort of relation with one another. But Ottilie persevered in her silence, and Edward could do nothing except entreat his wife to exert a patience which seemed wanting to himself. Charlotte sent messengers to Mittler and to the major. The former was absent from home, and could not be found. The latter came. To him Edward poured out all his heart, confessing every most trifling circumstance to him; and thus Charlotte learned fully what had passed, what had produced such violent excitement, and how so strange an alteration of their mutual position had been brought about.

She spoke with the utmost tenderness to her husband. She had nothing to ask of him except that for the present he would leave the poor girl to herself. Edward was not insensible to the worth, the affection, the strong sense of his wife; but his passion absorbed him exclusively. Charlotte tried to cheer him with hopes. She promised that she herself would make no difficulties about the separation, but it had small effect with him. He was so much shaken that hope and faith alternately forsook him. A species of insanity appeared to have taken possession of him. He urged Charlotte to promise to give her hand to the major. To satisfy and humour him, she did what he required. She engaged to become herself the wife of the major, in the event of Ottilie consenting to the marriage with Edward, with this express condition, however, that for the present the two gentlemen should go abroad together. The major had a foreign appointment from the court, and it was settled that Edward should accompany him. They arranged it all together, and in

doing so found a sort of comfort for themselves in the sense that at least something was being done.

In the meantime they had to notice that Ottilie took scarcely anything to eat or drink. She still persisted in refusing to speak. They at first used to talk to her; but it appeared to distress her, and they left it off. We are not, universally at least, so weak as to persist in torturing people for their good. Charlotte thought of all possible remedies. At last she fancied it might be well to ask the assistant of the school to come to them. He had much influence with Ottilie, and had been writing with much anxiety to inquire the cause of her not having arrived at the time he had been expecting her; but as yet she had not sent him any answer.

In order not to take Ottilie by surprise, they spoke of their intention in her presence. It did not seem to please her: she thought for some little time; at last she appeared to have formed some resolution. She retired to her own room, and ere night sent the following letter to the assembled party:

"OTTILIE TO HER FRIENDS.

"Why need I express in words, my dear friends, what is in itself so plain? I have stepped out of my course, and I cannot recover it again. A malignant spirit which has gained power over me seems to hinder me from without, even if within I could again become at peace with myself.

"My sole purpose was to renounce Edward, and to separate myself from him for ever. I had hoped that we might never meet again: it has turned out otherwise. Against his own will he stood before me. Too literally, perhaps, I have observed my promise never to admit him into conversation with me. My conscience and the feelings of the moment kept me silent toward him at the time, and now I have nothing more to say.

I have taken upon myself, under the impulse of the moment, a difficult vow, which, if it had been formed deliberately, might perhaps be painful and distressing. Let me now persist in the observance of it as long as my heart shall enjoin it to me. Do not call in any one to mediate; do not insist upon my speaking; do not urge me to eat or to drink more than I absolutely must. Bear with me and let me alone, and so help me on through the time: I am young, and youth has many unexpected means of restoring itself. Suffer my presence among you; cheer me with your love; make me wiser and better with what you say to one another, — but leave me to my own inward self."

The two friends had made all preparation for their journey: but their departure was still delayed by the formalities of the foreign appointment of the major, a delay most welcome to Edward. Ottilie's letter had roused all his eagerness again: he had gathered hope and comfort from her words, and now felt himself encouraged and justified in remaining and waiting. He declared, therefore, that he would not go: it would be folly indeed, he cried, of his own accord to throw away, by over-precipitateness, what was most valuable and most necessary to him, when, although there was a danger of losing it, there was nevertheless a chance that it might be preserved. "What is the right name of conduct such as that?" he said. "It is only that we desire to show that we are able to will, to choose. I myself, under the influences of the same ridiculous folly, have torn myself away, days before there was any necessity for it, from my friends, merely that I might not be forced to go by the definite expiration of my term. This time I will stay: what reason is there for my going? is she not already removed far enough from me? I am not likely now to catch her hand or press her to my heart: I could not even think of it without

a shudder. She has not separated herself from me: she has raised herself far above me."

And so he remained as he desired, as he was obliged; but he was never easy except when he found himself with Ottilie. She, too, had the same feeling with him: she could not tear herself away from the same blissful necessity. On all sides they exerted an indescribable, almost magical, power of attraction over one another. Living as they were under one roof, without even so much as thinking of each other, although they might be occupied with other things, or diverted this way or that way by the other members of the party, they always drew together. If they were in the same room, in a short time they were sure to be either standing or sitting near each other: they were only easy when as close together as they could be, but they were then completely easy. To be near was enough; there was no need for them either to look or to speak; they did not seek to touch one another or make sign or gesture, but merely to be together. Then there were not two, there was but one, in unconscious and perfect content, at peace, and at peace with the world. So it was, that, if either of them had been imprisoned at the farther end of the house, the other would by degrees, without intending it, have moved thither. Life was to them a riddle, the solution of which they could find only in union.

Ottilie was throughout so cheerful and quiet that they were able to feel perfectly easy about her; she was seldom absent from the society of her friends; all that she had desired was, that she might be allowed to eat alone, with no one to attend upon her but Nanny.

What habitually befalls any person repeats itself more often than one is apt to suppose, because his own nature gives the immediate occasion for it. Character, individuality, inclination, tendency, locality, circumstance, and habits form together a whole, in which

every man moves as in an atmosphere, and where only he feels himself at ease in his proper element.

And so we find men, of whose changeableness so many complaints are made, after many years, to our surprise, unchanged, and in all their infinite tendencies, outward and inward, unchangeable.

Thus, in the daily life of our friends, almost everything glided on again in its old smooth track. Ottilie still displayed by many silent attentions her obliging nature, and the others like her continued each themselves; and then the domestic circle exhibited an image of their former life, so like it, that they might be pardoned if at times they fancied all might be again as it was once.

The autumn days, which were of the same length with those old spring days, brought the party back into the house out of the air about the same hour. The gay fruits and flowers which belonged to the season might have made them fancy it was now the autumn of that first spring, and the interval dropped out of remembrance; for the flowers which now were blowing were such as they then had sown, and the fruits were now ripening on the trees they had at that time seen in blossom.

The major went backwards and forwards, and Mittler came frequently. The evenings were generally spent in exactly the same way. Edward usually read aloud, with more life and feeling than before, much better, and even, it may be said, with more cheerfulness. It appeared as if he were endeavouring, by light-heartedness as much as by devotion, to quicken Ottilie's torpor into life, and dissolve her silence. He seated himself in the same position as he used to do, that she might look over his book: he was uneasy and distracted unless she was doing so, unless he was sure that she was following his words with her eyes.

Every trace had vanished of the unpleasant, ungra-

cious feelings of the intervening time. No one had any secret complaint against another: there were no cross purposes, no bitterness. The major accompanied Charlotte's playing with his violin; and Edward's flute sounded again, as formerly, in harmony with Ottilie's piano. Thus they were now approaching Edward's birthday, which the year before they had missed celebrating. This time they were to keep it without any festivities, in quiet enjoyment among themselves. They had so settled it together, half expressly, half from a tacit agreement. As they approached nearer to this epoch, however, an anxiety about it, which had hitherto been more felt than observed, became more noticeable in Ottilie's manner. She was to be seen often in the garden examining the flowers. She had signified to the gardener that he was to save as many as he could of every sort; and she had been especially occupied with the asters, which this year were blowing in immense profusion.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE most remarkable feature, however, which was observed about Ottilie was, that, for the first time, she had now unpacked the box, and had selected a variety of things out of it, which she had cut up, and which were intended evidently to make one complete suit for her. The rest, with Nanny's assistance, she had endeavoured to replace again; and she had been hardly able to get it done, the space being over full, although a portion had been taken out. The covetous little Nanny could never satisfy herself with looking at all the pretty things, especially as she found provision made there for every article of dress which could be wanted, even the smallest. Numbers of shoes and stockings, garters with devices on them, gloves, and various other things, were left; and she begged Ottilie just to give her one or two of them. Ottilie refused to do that, but opened a drawer in her wardrobe, and told the girl to take what she liked. The latter hastily and clumsily dashed in her hand and seized what she could, running off at once with her booty, to show it off and display her good fortune among the rest of the servants.

At last Ottilie succeeded in packing everything carefully into its place. She then opened a secret compartment, which was contrived in the lid, where she kept a number of notes and letters from Edward, many dried flowers, the mementos of their early walks together, a lock of his hair, and various other little matters. She now added one more to them, — her father's

portrait, — and then locked it all up, and hung the delicate key by a gold chain about her neck, against her heart.

In the meantime, her friends had now in their hearts begun to entertain the best hopes for her. Charlotte was convinced that she would one day begin to speak again. She had latterly seen signs about her which implied that she was engaged in secret about something; a look of cheerful self-satisfaction, a smile like that which hangs about the face of persons who have something pleasant and delightful, which they are keeping concealed from those whom they love. No one knew that she spent many hours in extreme exhaustion, and that only at rare intervals, when she appeared in public through the power of her will, she was able to rouse herself.

Mittler had latterly been a frequent visitor, and when he came he stayed longer than he usually did at other times. This strong-willed, resolute person was only too well aware that there is a certain moment in which alone it will answer to smite the iron. Ottilie's silence and reserve he interpreted according to his own wishes: no steps had as yet been taken toward a separation of the husband and wife. He hoped to be able to determine the fortunes of the poor girl in some not undesirable way. He listened, he allowed himself to seem convinced: he was discreet and unobtrusive, and conducted himself in his own way with sufficient prudence. There was but one occasion on which he uniformly forgot himself, — when he found an opportunity for giving his opinion upon subjects to which he attached a great importance. He lived much within himself: and when he was with others, his only relation to them generally was in active employment on their behalf; but if once, when among friends, his tongue broke fairly loose, as on more than one occasion we have already seen, he rolled out his words in

utter recklessness whether they wounded or whether they pleased, whether they did evil or whether they did good.

The evening before the birthday, the major and Charlotte were sitting together expecting Edward, who had gone out for a ride; Mittler was walking up and down the room; Ottilie was in her own room, laying out the dress which she was to wear on the morrow, and making signs to her maid about a number of things, which the girl, who perfectly understood her silent language, arranged as she was ordered.

Mittler had fallen exactly on his favourite subject. One of the points on which he used most to insist was, that in the education of children, as well as in the conduct of nations, there was nothing more worthless and barbarous than laws and commandments forbidding this and that action. "Man is naturally active," he said, "wherever he is; and, if you know how to tell him what to do, he will do it immediately, and keep straight in the direction in which you set him. I myself, in my own circle, am far better pleased to endure faults and mistakes, till I know what the opposite virtue is that I am to enjoin, than to be rid of the faults and to have nothing good to put in their place. A man is really glad to do what is right and sensible, if he only knows how to get at it. It is no such great matter with him: he does it because he must have something to do, and he thinks no more about it afterward than he does of the silliest freaks which he engaged in out of the purest idleness. I cannot tell you how it annoys me to hear people going over and over those Ten Commandments in teaching children. The fifth is a thoroughly beautiful, rational, preceptive precept. 'Thou shalt honour thy father and thy mother.' If the children will inscribe that well upon their hearts, they have the whole day before them to put it in practice. But the sixth now? What can we say to

that? 'Thou shalt do no murder;' as if any man ever felt the slightest general inclination to strike another man dead. Men will hate sometimes; they will fly into passions and forget themselves; and, as a consequence of this or other feelings, it may easily come now and then to a murder; but what a barbarous precaution it is to tell children that they are not to kill or murder! If the commandment ran, 'Have a regard for the life of another; put away whatever can do him hurt; save him, though with personal risk; if you injure him, consider that you are injuring yourself,' — that is the form which should be in use among educated, reasonable people. And in our catechism teaching we have only an awkward, clumsy way of sliding into it, through a 'what does that mean?'

"And as for the seventh, that is utterly detestable. What! to stimulate the precocious curiosity of children to pry into dangerous mysteries; to obtrude violently upon their imaginations ideas and notions which beyond all things you should wish to keep from them! It were far better if such actions as that commandment speaks of were dealt with arbitrarily by some secret tribunal, than prated openly of before church and congregation —"

At this moment Ottilie entered the room.

"'Thou shalt not commit adultery,'" Mittler went on: "how coarse! how brutal! What a different sound it has, if you let it run, 'Thou shalt hold in reverence the bond of marriage. When thou seest a husband and a wife between whom there is true love, thou shalt rejoice in it; and their happiness shall gladden thee like the cheerful light of a beautiful day. If there arise anything to make division between them, thou shalt use thy best endeavour to clear it away. Thou shalt labour to pacify them, and to soothe them; to show each of them the excellencies of the other.

Thou shalt not think of thyself; but with noble disinterestedness thou shalt seek to further the well-being of others, and make them feel what a happiness is that which arises out of all duty done, and especially out of that duty which holds man and wife indissolubly bound together.'"

Charlotte felt as if she was sitting on hot coals. The situation was the more distressing, as she was convinced that Mittler was not thinking the least where he was or what he was saying; and, before she was able to interrupt him, she saw Ottilie, after changing colour painfully for a few seconds, rise, and leave the room.

Charlotte constrained herself to seem unembarrassed. "You will leave us the eighth commandment," she said, with a faint smile.

"All the rest," replied Mittler, "if I may only insist first on the foundation of the whole of them."

At this moment Nanny rushed in, screaming and crying, "She is dying; the young lady is dying; come to her, come!"

Ottilie had found her way back with extreme difficulty to her own room. The beautiful things she was to wear the next day were spread on a number of chairs; and the girl, who had been running from one to the other, staring at them and admiring them, called out in her ecstasy, "Look, dearest madam, only look! There is a bridal dress worthy of you."

Ottilie heard the word, and sank upon the sofa. Nanny saw her mistress turn pale, fall back, and faint. She ran for Charlotte, who came. The medical friend was on the spot in a moment. He thought it was nothing but exhaustion. He ordered some strong soup to be brought. Ottilie refused it with an expression of loathing: it almost threw her into convulsions when they put the cup to her lips. A light seemed to break on the physician: he asked hastily and anxiously what

Ottilie had taken that day. The little girl hesitated. He repeated his question, and then she acknowledged that Ottilie had taken nothing.

There was a nervousness of manner about Nanny which made him suspicious. He carried her with him into the adjoining room; Charlotte followed; and the girl threw herself on her knees, and confessed, that, for a long time past, Ottilie had taken as good as nothing; at her mistress's urgent request, she had herself eaten the food which had been brought for her; she had said nothing about it, because Ottilie had by signs alternately begged her not to tell any one, and threatened her if she did; and, as she innocently added, "because it was so nice."

The major and Mittler now came up as well. They found Charlotte busy with the physician. The pale, beautiful girl was sitting, apparently conscious, in the corner of the sofa. They had begged her to lie down; she had declined to do this: but she made signs to have her box brought, and, resting her feet upon it, placed herself in an easy, half recumbent position. She seemed desirous of taking leave, and, by her gestures, was expressing to all about her the tenderest affection, love, gratitude, entreaties for forgiveness, and the most heartfelt farewell.

Edward, on alighting from his horse, was informed of what had happened: he rushed to the room, threw himself down at her side, and, seizing her hand, deluged it with silent tears. In this position he remained a long time. At last he called out, "And am I never more to hear your voice? Will you not turn back toward life, to give me one single word? Well, then, very well. I will follow you yonder, and there we will speak in another language."

She pressed his hand with all the strength she had: she gazed at him with a glance full of life and full of love; and drawing a long breath, and for a little while

moving her lips inarticulately, with a tender effort of affection she called out, "Promise me to live;" and then fell back immediately.

"I promise, I promise!" he cried to her; but he cried only after her: she was already gone.

After a miserable night, the care of providing for the loved remains fell upon Charlotte. The major and Mittler assisted her. Edward's condition was utterly pitiable. His first thought, when he was in any degree recovered from his despair, and able to collect himself, was, that Ottilie should not be carried out of the castle, she should be kept there, and attended upon as if she were alive; for she was not dead, it was impossible that she should be dead. They did what he desired; at least, so far as that they did not do what he had forbidden. He did not ask to see her.

There was now a second alarm, and a further cause for anxiety. Nanny, who had been spoken to sharply by the physician, had been compelled by threats to confess, and after her confession had been overwhelmed with reproaches, had now disappeared. After a long search she was found, but she appeared to be out of her mind. Her parents took her home; but the gentlest treatment had no effect upon her, and she had to be locked up for fear she should run away again.

They succeeded by degrees in rescuing Edward from utter despair, but only to make him more really wretched. He now saw clearly, he could not doubt how, that the happiness of his life was gone from him for ever. It was suggested to him, that, if Ottilie were buried in the chapel, she would still remain among the living; and it would be a calm, quiet, peaceful home for her. There was much difficulty in obtaining his consent: he would only give it under condition that she should be taken there in an open coffin; that the vault in which she was laid, if covered at all, should be only covered with glass; and a lamp should be kept

always burning there. It was arranged that this should be done, and then he seemed resigned.

They clothed the lovely body in the festal dress she had herself prepared, and wreathed about her head a garland of asters, which shone sadly there like melancholy stars. To decorate the bier and the church and chapel, the gardens were robbed of their beauty: they lay desolate, as if a premature winter had blighted all their loveliness. At early morning she was borne in an open coffin out of the castle, and the heavenly features were once more reddened with the rising sun. The mourners crowded about her as she was being taken along. None would go before, none would follow, every one would be where she was, every one would enjoy her presence for the last time. Not one of all present, men, women, boys, remained unmoved; least of all to be consoled were the girls, who felt most immediately what they had lost.

Nanny was not present: it had been thought better not to allow it, and they had kept secret from her the day and the hour of the funeral. She was at her parents' house, closely watched, in a room looking toward the garden. But, when she heard the bells tolling, she knew too well what they meant; and her attendant having left her out of curiosity to see the funeral, she escaped out of the window into a passage, and from thence, finding all the doors locked, into an upper open loft. At this moment the funeral was passing through the village, which had been all freshly strewed with leaves. Nanny saw her mistress plainly close below her, more plainly, more entirely, than any one in the procession underneath; she appeared to be lifted above the earth, borne as it were on clouds or waves: and the girl fancied she was making signs to her; her senses swam; she tottered, swayed herself for a moment on the edge, and fell to the ground. The crowd fell asunder on all sides with a cry of horror.

In the tumult and confusion, the bearers were obliged to set down the coffin; the girl lay close by it; it seemed as if every limb was broken. They lifted her up, and by accident or providentially she was allowed to lean over the body: she appeared, indeed, to be endeavouring, with what remained to her of life, to reach her beloved mistress. Scarcely, however, had the loosely hanging limbs touched Ottilie's robe, and the powerless finger rested on the folded hands, than the girl started up, and, first raising her arms and eyes toward heaven, flung herself down upon her knees before the coffin, and gazed with passionate devotion at her mistress.

At last she sprang, as if inspired, from off the ground, and cried with a voice of ecstasy, "Yes, she has forgiven me what no man, what I myself, could never have forgiven. God forgives me through her look, her motion, her lips. Now she is lying again so still and quiet; but you saw how she raised herself up, and unfolded her hands and blessed me, and how kindly she looked at me. You all heard, you can witness, that she said to me, 'You are forgiven.' I am not a murderess any more. She has forgiven me. God has forgiven me, and no one may now say anything more against me."

The people stood crowding around her. They were amazed: they listened, and looked this way and that; and no one knew what should next be done. "Bear her on to her rest," said the girl. "She has done her part: she has suffered, and cannot now remain any more among us." The bier moved on, Nanny now following it; and thus they reached the church and the chapel.

So now stood the coffin of Ottilie, with the child's coffin at her head, and her box at her feet, enclosed in a resting-place of massive oak. A woman had been provided to watch the body for the first part of the

time, as it lay there so beautifully beneath its glass covering. But Nanny would not permit this duty to be taken from herself. She would remain alone without a companion, and attend to the lamp which was now kindled for the first time; and she begged to be allowed to do it with so much eagerness and perseverance, that they let her have her way, to prevent any greater evil that might ensue.

But she did not long remain alone. As night was falling, and the hanging lamp began to exercise its full right and shed abroad a larger lustre, the door opened, and the architect entered the chapel. The chastely ornamented walls in the mild light looked more strange, more awful, more antique, than he was prepared to see them. Nanny was sitting on one side of the coffin. She recognised him immediately, but she pointed in silence to the pale form of her mistress. And there stood he on the other side, in the vigour of youth and of grace, with his arms drooping, and his hands clasped piteously together, motionless, with head and eye inclined over the inanimate body.

Once already he had stood thus before in the "Belisarius:" he had now involuntarily fallen into the same attitude. And this time how naturally! Here, too, was something of inestimable worth thrown down from its high estate. *There* were courage, prudence, power, rank, and wealth in one single man, lost irrevocably; *there* were qualities which, in decisive moments, had been of indispensable service to the nation and the prince, but which, when the moment was passed, were no more valued, but flung aside and neglected, and cared for no longer. And *here* were many other silent virtues, which had been summoned but a little time before by nature out of the depths of her treasures, and now swept rapidly away again by her careless hand, — rare, sweet, lovely virtues, whose peaceful workings the thirsty world had welcomed,

while it had them, with gladness and joy, and now was sorrowing for them in unavailing desire.

Both the youth and the girl were silent for a long time. But when she saw the tears streaming fast down his cheeks, and he appeared to be sinking under the burden of his sorrow, she spoke to him with so much truthfulness and power, with such kindness and such confidence, that, astonished at the flow of her words, he was able to recover himself; and he saw his beautiful friend floating before him in the new life of a higher world. His tears ceased flowing; his sorrow grew lighter: on his knees he took leave of Ottilie; and, with a warm pressure of the hand of Nanny, he rode away from the spot into the night without having seen a single other person.

The surgeon had, without the girl being aware of it, remained all night in the church; and, when he went in the morning to see her, he found her cheerful and tranquil. He was prepared for wild aberrations. He thought that she would be sure to speak to him of conversations which she had held in the night with Ottilie, and of other such apparitions. But she was natural, quiet, and perfectly self-possessed. She remembered accurately what had happened in her previous life: she could describe the circumstances of it with the greatest exactness, and never, in anything which she said, stepped out of the course of what was real and natural, except in her account of what had passed with the body, which she delighted to repeat again and again, how Ottilie had raised herself up, had blessed her, had forgiven her, and thereby set her at rest for ever.

Ottilie remained so long in her beautiful state, which more resembled sleep than death, that a number of persons were attracted there to look at her. The neighbours and the villagers wished to see her again, and every one desired to hear Nanny's incredible story

from her own mouth. Many laughed at it, most doubted, and some few were found who were able to believe.

Difficulties, for which no real satisfaction is attainable, compel us to faith. Before the eyes of all the world, Nanny's limbs had been broken, and by touching the sacred body she had been restored to strength again. Why should not others find similar good fortune? Delicate mothers first privately brought their children who were suffering from obstinate disorders, and they believed that they could trace an immediate improvement. The confidence of the people increased, and at last there was no one so old or so weak as not to have come to seek fresh life and health and strength at this place. The concourse became so great, that they were obliged, except at the hours of divine service, to keep the church and chapel closed.

Edward did not venture to look at her again: he lived on mechanically; he seemed to have no tears left, and to be incapable of any further suffering; his power of taking interest in what was going on diminished every day; his appetite gradually failed. The only refreshment which did him any good was what he drank out of the glass, which to him, indeed, had been but an untrue prophet. He continued to gaze at the intertwining initials, and the earnest cheerfulness of his expression seemed to signify that he still hoped to be united with her at last. And as every little circumstance combines to favour the fortunate, and every accident contributes to elate him; so do the most trifling occurrences love to unite to crush and overwhelm the unhappy. One day, as Edward raised the beloved glass to his lips, he put it down, and thrust it from him with a shudder. It was the same, and not the same. He missed a little private mark upon it. The valet was questioned, and had to confess that the real glass had not long since been broken,

and that one like it, belonging to the same set, had been substituted in its place.

Edward could not be angry. His destiny had spoken out with sufficient clearness in the fact, and how should he be affected by the shadow? and yet it touched him deeply. He seemed now to dislike taking any beverage, and thenceforward purposely to abstain from food and from speaking.

But from time to time a sort of restlessness came over him: he would desire to eat and drink something, and would begin again to speak. "Ah!" he said one day to the major, who now seldom left his side, "how unhappy I am that all my efforts are but imitations ever, and false and fruitless. What was blessedness to her, is pain to me; and yet, for the sake of this blessedness, I am forced to take this pain upon myself. I must go after her, follow her by the same road. But my nature and my promise hold me back. It is a terrible difficulty, indeed, to imitate the inimitable. I feel clearly, my dear friend, that genius is required for everything, — for martyrdom as well as the rest."

What shall we say of the endeavours which, in this hopeless condition, were made for him? His wife, his friends, his physician, incessantly laboured to do something for him. But it was all in vain: at last they found him dead. Mittler was the first to make the melancholy discovery: he called the physician, and examined closely, with his usual presence of mind, the circumstances under which he had been found. Charlotte rushed in; for she was afraid that he had committed suicide, and accused herself and accused others of unpardonable carelessness. But the physician on natural, and Mittler on moral, grounds, were soon able to satisfy her of the contrary, It was quite clear that Edward's end had taken him by surprise. In a quiet moment he had taken out of his pocketbook and out of a casket everything which remained to him as me-

morials of Ottilie, and had spread them out before him, — a lock of hair, flowers which had been gathered in some happy hour, and every letter which she had written to him from the first, which his wife had ominously happened to give him. It was impossible that he would intentionally have exposed these to the danger of being seen by the first person who might happen to discover him.

But so lay the heart, which, but a short time before, had been so swift and eager, at rest now, where it could never be disturbed; and falling asleep, as he did, with his thoughts on one so saintly, he might well be called blessed. Charlotte gave him his place at Ottilie's side, and arranged that thenceforth no other person should be placed with them in the same vault.

In order to secure this, she made it a condition under which she settled considerable sums of money on the church and the school.

So lie the lovers, sleeping side by side. Peace hovers above their resting-place. Fair angel faces gaze down upon them from the vaulted ceiling; and what a happy moment that will be when one day they wake again together!

The Good Women

The Good Women

HENRIETTA and Armidoro had been for some time engaged in walking through the garden, in which the Summer Club was accustomed to assemble. It had long been their practice to arrive before the other members; for they entertained the warmest attachment to each other, and their pure and virtuous friendship fostered the delightful hope that they would shortly be united in the bonds of unchanging affection.

Henrietta, who was of a lively disposition, no sooner perceived her friend Amelia approach the summer-house from a distance, than she ran to welcome her. The latter was already seated at a table in the ante-chamber, where the newspapers, journals, and other recent publications, lay displayed.

It was her custom to spend occasional evenings in reading in this appartment, without paying attention to the company who came and went, or suffering herself to be disturbed by the rattling of the dice, or the loud conversation which prevailed at the gaming-tables. She spoke little, except for the purpose of rational conversation. Henrietta, on the contrary, was not so sparing of her words; being of an easily satisfied disposition, and ever ready with expressions of commendation. They were soon joined by a third person, whom we shall call Sinclair. "What news do you

bring?" exclaimed Henrietta, addressing him as he approached.

"You will scarcely guess," replied Sinclair, as he opened a portfolio. "And even if I inform you that I have brought for your inspection the engravings intended for the 'Ladies' Almanac' of this year, you will hardly guess the subjects they portray; but when I tell you that young ladies are represented in a series of twelve engravings —"

"Indeed!" exclaimed Henrietta, interrupting him, "you have no intention, I perceive, of putting our ingenuity to the test. You jest, if I mistake not; for you know how I delight in riddles and charades, and in guessing my friends' enigmas. Twelve young ladies, you say, — sketches of character, I suppose; some adventures or situations, or something else that redounds to the honour of the sex."

Sinclair smiled in silence; whilst Amelia watched him with calm composure, and then remarked, with that fine sarcastic tone which so well became her, "If I read his countenance truly, he has something to produce of which we shall not quite approve. Men are so fond of discovering something which shall have the appearance of turning us into ridicule."

Sinclair. — You are becoming serious, Amelia, and threaten to grow satirical. I shall scarcely venture to open my little packet.

Henrietta. — Oh! produce it.

Sinclair. — They are caricatures.

Henrietta. — I love them of all things.

Sinclair. — Sketches of naughty ladies.

Henrietta. — So much the better: we do not belong to that class. Their portraits would afford us as little pleasure as their society.

Sinclair. — Shall I show them?

Henrietta. — Do so at once.

So saying, she snatched the portfolio from him,

took out the pictures, spread six of them upon the table, glanced over them hastily, and then shuffled them together as if they had been a pack of cards. "Capital!" she exclaimed: "they are done to the very life. This one, for instance, holding a pinch of snuff to her nose, is the very image of Madame S——, whom we shall meet this evening; and this old lady with the cat is not unlike my grand-aunt; that figure holding the skein of thread resembles our old milliner. We can find an original for every one of these ugly figures; and even amongst the men, I have somewhere or other seen such an old fellow bent double, and also a close resemblance to the figure holding the thread. They are full of fun, these engravings, and admirably executed."

Amelia, who had glanced carelessly at the pictures and instantly withdrawn her eyes, inquired how they could look for resemblances in such things. "One deformity is like another, just as the beautiful ever resembles the beautiful. Our minds are irresistibly attracted by the latter in the same degree as they are repelled by the former.

Sinclair. — But our fancy and our wit find more amusement in deformity than in beauty. Much can be made of the former, but nothing at all of the latter.

"But beauty exalts, whilst deformity degrades, us," observed Armidoro, who, from his post at the window, had paid silent attention to all that had occurred. Without approaching the table, he now withdrew into the adjoining cabinet.

All clubs have their peculiar epochs. The interest the members take in each other, and their friendly agreement, are of a fluctuating character. The club of which we speak had now attained its zenith. The members were, for the most part, men of refinement, or at least of calm and quiet deportment: they mutually recognised each other's value, and allowed all

want of merit to find its own level. Each one sought his own individual amusement, and the general conversation was often of a nature to attract attention.

At this time, a gentleman named Seyton arrived, accompanied by his wife. He was a man who had seen much of the world, first from his engagement in business, and afterward in political affairs: he was, moreover, an agreeable companion; although, in mixed society, he was chiefly remarkable for his talent as a card-player. His wife was a worthy woman, kind and faithful, and enjoying the most perfect confidence and esteem of her husband. She felt happy that she could now give uncontrolled indulgence to her taste for pleasure. At home she could not exist without a companion, and she found in amusement and diversions the only incentive to home enjoyment.

We must treat our readers as strangers, or rather as visitors to the club; and in full confidence we must introduce them speedily to our new society. A poet paints his characters by describing their actions: we must adopt a shorter course, and by a hasty sketch introduce our readers rapidly to the scenes.

Seyton approached the table and looked at the pictures.

"A discussion has arisen," observed Henrietta, "with respect to caricatures. What side do you take? I am in favour of them, and wish to know whether all caricatures do not possess something irresistibly attractive?"

Amelia. — And does not every evil calumny, provide it relate to the absent, also possess an incredible charm?

Henrietta. — But does not a sketch of this kind produce an indelible impression?

Amelia. — And that is just the reason why I condemn it. Is not the indelible impression of what is disagreeable precisely the evil which so constantly pursues us in life and destroys our greatest enjoyments?

Henrietta. — Favour us, Seyton, with your opinion.

Seyton. — I should propose a compromise. Why should our pictures be better than ourselves? Our nature seems to have two sides, which cannot exist separately. Light and darkness, good and evil, height and depth, virtue and vice, and a thousand other contradictions unequally distributed, appear to constitute the component parts of human nature; and why, therefore, should I blame an artist, who, whilst he paints an angel bright, brilliant, and beautiful, on the other hand paints a devil black, ugly, and hateful?

Amelia. — There could be no objection to such a course, if caricaturists did not introduce within their province subjects which belong to higher spheres.

Seyton. — So far, I think you perfectly right. But artists, whose province is the Beautiful alone, also appropriate what does not precisely belong to them.

Amelia. — I have no patience, however, with caricaturists who ridicule the portraits of eminent men. In spite of my better sense, I can never consider that great man Pitt as anything else than a snub-nosed broomstick; and Fox, who was in many respects an estimable character, anything better than a pig stuffed to its utmost capacity.

Henrietta. — Precisely my view. Caricatures of such a nature make an indelible impression, and I cannot deny that it often affords amusement to evoke their recollection and pervert them even into worse distortions.

Sinclair. — But, ladies, allow us to revert for a moment from this discussion to a consideration of our engravings.

Seyton. — I observe that a fancy for dogs is here delineated in no very flattering manner.

Amelia. — I have no objection, for I detest these animals.

Sinclair. — First an enemy to caricatures, and then unfriendly to the dog tribe.

Amelia. — And why not? What are such animals but caricatures of men?

Seyton. — You probably remember what a certain traveller relates of the city of Gratz, "that the place was full of dogs, and of dumb persons half idiotic." Might it not be possible that the habitual sight of so many barking, senseless animals should have produced an effect upon the human race?

Sinclair. — Our attachment to animals deteriorates our passions and affections.

Amelia. — But if our reason, according to the general expression, is sometimes capable of standing still, it may surely do so in the presence of dogs.

Sinclair. — Fortunately there is no one in our company who cares for dogs but Madame Seyton. She is very much attached to her pretty greyhound.

Seyton. — And that same animal is particularly dear and valuable to her husband.

Madame Seyton, from a distance, raised her finger in threat of her husband.

Seyton. — I know a proof that such animals detach our affections from their legitimate objects. May I not, my dear child (addressing his wife), relate our anecdote? We need not be ashamed of it.

Madame Seyton signified her assent by a friendly nod, and he commenced his narration.

"We loved each other, and had entered into an engagement to marry before we had well considered the possibility of supporting an establishment. At length better hopes began to dawn, when I was unexpectedly compelled to set out upon a journey which threatened to last longer than I could have wished. On my departure I forgot my favourite greyhound. It had often been in the habit of accompanying me to the house of my betrothed, sometimes returning with

me, and occasionally remaining behind. It now became her property, was a cheerful companion, and reminded her of my return. At home the little animal afforded much amusement; and in the promenades, where we had so often walked together, it seemed constantly engaged in looking for me, and barked as if announcing me, as it sprang from among the trees. My darling little Meta amused itself thus for a considerable time by fancying me really present, until at length, about the time when I had hoped to return, the period of my absence being again indefinitely prolonged, the poor animal pined away and died."

Madame Seyton. — Just so, dear husband. And your narrative is sweetly interesting.

Seyton. — You are quite at liberty to interrupt me, my dear, if you think fit. My friend's house now seemed desolate; her walks had lost all their interest; her favourite dog, which had ever been at her side when she wrote to me, had grown to be an actual necessity of existence; and her letters were now discontinued. She found, however, some consolation in the company of a handsome youth, who evinced an anxiety to fill the place of her former four-footed companion, both in the house and on her walks. But without enlarging on this subject, and let me be ever so inimical to rash judgments, I may say that matters began to assume a rather critical appearance.

Madame Seyton. — I must let you continue. A story which is all truth, and wholly free from exaggeration, is seldom worth hearing.

Seyton. — A mutual friend, versed in the world, and acquainted with human nature, continued to reside near my dear friend after my departure. He paid frequent visits at her house, and had noticed the change she had undergone. He formed his plan in secrecy, and called upon her one day, accompanied by a greyhound which precisely resembled mine. The cordially

affectionate and appropriate address with which he accompanied his present, the unexpected appearance of a favourite which seemed to have risen from the grave, the silent rebuke with which her susceptible heart reproached her at the sight, brought back to her mind a lively recollection of me. My young friend, who had hitherto filled my place, accordingly received his *congé* in the politest manner possible; and the new favourite was retained by the lady as her constant companion. When, upon my return, I held my beloved in my embrace, I thought the greyhound was my own, and wondered not a little that he barked at me as at a stranger. I thought that dogs of the present day had far less faithful memories than those of classical times, and observed that Ulysses had been remembered by his dog after many years' absence, whilst mine had forgotten me in an incredibly short space of time. "And yet he has taken good care of your Penelope," she replied, promising at the same time to explain her mysterious speech. This was soon done, for cheerful confidence has at all times caused the happiness of our union.

Madame Seyton. — Well, now, conclude with the anecdote. If you please, I will walk for an hour; for you intend doubtless to sit down to the card-table.

He nodded his assent. She took the arm of her companion, and went toward the door. "Take the dog with you, my dear!" he exclaimed as she departed. The entire company smiled, as did Seyton also, when he saw how apt had been his unintentional observation; and every one else silently felt a trifling degree of malicious satisfaction.

Sinclair. — You have told us of a dog that was happily instrumental in promoting a marriage: I can tell of another whose influence destroyed one. I was also once in love, and it was also my fate to set out upon a journey; and I also left my love behind me, with this

difference: my wish to possess her was as yet unknown to her. At length I returned. The many adventures in which I had engaged were strongly imprinted upon my mind. Like all travellers I was fond of recounting them, and I hoped by this means to win the attention and sympathy of my beloved. I was anxious that she should know all the experience I had acquired, and the pleasures I had enjoyed. But I found that her attention was wholly directed to a dog. Whether this was done from that spirit of opposition which so often characterises the fair sex, or whether it arose from some unlucky accident, it so happened that the amiable qualities of the dog, their pretty amusements, and her attachment to the little animal, were the sole topics of conversation which she could find for a lover who had long been passionately devoted to her. I marvelled, and ceased speaking; then related various other circumstances I had reserved for her whilst I was absent. I then felt vexed at her coldness, and took my leave, but soon returned with feelings of self-reproach, and became even more unhappy than before. Under these circumstances our attachment cooled, our acquaintance was discontinued; and I felt in my heart that I might attribute the misfortune to a dog.

Armidoro, who had once more joined the company from the cabinet, observed, upon hearing the anecdote, "that it would be interesting to make a collection of stories showing the influence social animals of the lower order exercise over mankind. In the expectation that such a collection will be one day made, I will relate an anecdote to show how a dog was the cause of a very tragical occurrence.

"Ferrand and Cardano, two noblemen, had been attached friends from their very earliest youth. As court-pages, and as officers in the same regiment, they had shared many adventures together, and had become thoroughly acquainted with each other's dispositions.

Cardano's attraction was the fair sex, whilst Ferrand had a passion for gambling. The former was thoughtless and haughty, the latter suspicious and reserved. It happened, at a time when Cardano was accidentally obliged to break off a certain tender attachment, that he left a beautiful little pet spaniel behind him. He soon procured another, which he afterward presented to a second lady, from whom he was about to separate; and from that time, upon taking leave of every new female friend with whom he had become intimate, he invariably presented her with a similar little spaniel. Ferrand was aware of Cardano's peculiar habit in this respect, but he never paid much attention to the circumstance.

"The different pursuits of the two friends at length caused a long separation between them; and, when they next met, Ferrand had become a married man, and was leading the life of a country gentleman. Cardano spent some time with him, either at his house or in the neighbourhood, where, as he had many relations and friends, he resided for nearly a year.

"Upon his departure, Ferrand's attention was attracted by a very beautiful spaniel of which his wife had lately become possessed. He took it in his arms, admired its beauty, stroked it, praised it, and inquired where she had obtained so charming an animal. She replied, 'From Cardano.' He was at once struck with the memory of bygone times and events, and with a recollection of the significant memorial with which Cardano was accustomed to mark his insincerity: he felt oppressed with the indignity of an injured husband, raged violently, flung the innocent little animal with fury to the earth, and ran from the apartment amid the cries of the spaniel and the supplications of his astonished wife. A fearful dispute and countless disagreeable consequences ensued, which, though they did not produce an actual divorce, ended in a mutual

agreement to separate; and a ruined household was the termination of this adventure."

The story was not quite finished when Eulalia entered the apartment. She was a young lady whose society was universally sought after; and she formed one of the most attractive ornaments of the club, — an accomplished woman and successful authoress.

The female caricatures were laid before her with which a clever artist had sinned against the fair sex, and she was invited to defend her good sisterhood.

"Probably," said Amelia, "a collection of these charming portraits is intended for the almanac, and possibly some celebrated author will undertake the witty task of explaining in words what the ingenious artist has represented in his pictures."

Sinclair felt that the pictures were not worthy of utter condemnation; nor could he deny that some sort of explanation of their meaning was necessary, as a caricature which is not understood is worthless, and is, in fact, only valuable for its application. For, however the ingenious artist may endeavour to display his wit, he cannot always succeed; and without a title or an explanation his labour is lost: words alone can give it value.

Amelia. — Then, let words bestow a value upon this little picture. A young lady has fallen asleep in an armchair, having been engaged, as it appears, with some sort of writing. Another lady, who stands by weeping, presents a small box, or something else, to her companion. What can it mean?

Sinclair. — Am I, after all, to explain it, notwithstanding that the ladies seem but ill disposed both to caricatures and their expounders? I am told that it is intended to represent an authoress, who was accustomed to compose at night: she always obliged her maid to hold her inkstand, and forced the poor creature to remain in that posture, even when she herself

had been overcome by sleep, and the office of her maid had thus been rendered useless. She was desirous, on awaking, to resume the thread of her thoughts and of her composition, and wished to find her pen and ink ready at the same moment.

Arbon, a thoughtful artist who had accompanied Eulalia, declared war against the picture. He observed, that to delineate this circumstance, or whatever it may be called, another course should have been adopted.

Henrietta. — Let us, then, compose the picture afresh.

Arbon. — But let us first of all consider the subject attentively. It seems natural enough that a person employed in writing should cause the inkstand to be held, if the circumstances are such that no place can be found to set it down. So Brantome's grandmother held the inkstand for the Queen of Navarre, when the latter, reposing in her litter, composed the history which we have all read with so much pleasure. Again, that any one who writes in bed should cause his inkstand to be held, is quite conceivable. But tell us, pretty Henrietta, you who are so fond of questioning and guessing, tell us what the artist should have done to represent this subject properly.

Henrietta. — He ought to have removed the table, and given the sleeper such an attitude, that nothing should appear at hand upon which an inkstand could be placed.

Arbon. — Quite right. I should have drawn her in a well-cushioned easy chair, of the fashion which, if I mistake not, are called Bergères: she should have been near the fireplace, and presenting a front view to the spectator. I should suppose her to be engaged in writing upon her knee, for usually one becomes uncomfortable in exacting an inconvenience from another. The paper sinks upon her lap, the pen from her hand; and a sweet maiden stands near, holding the inkstand with a forlorn look.

Henrietta. — Quite right. But here we have an inkstand upon the table already; and what is to be done, therefore, with the inkstand in the hand of the maiden? It is not easy to conceive why she should seem to be wiping away her tears.

Sinclair. — Here I defend the artist: he allows scope for the ingenuity of the commentator.

Arbon. — Who will probably be engaged in exercising his wit upon the headless men that hang against the wall. This seems to me a clear proof of the inevitable confusion that arises from uniting arts between which there is no natural connection. If we were not accustomed to see engravings with explanations appended to them, the evil would cease. I have no objection that a clever artist should attempt witty representations; but they are difficult to execute, and he should at all events endeavour to make his subject independent of explanations. I could even tolerate remarks and little sentences issuing from the mouths of his figures, provided he turn his own commentator.

Sinclair. — But, if you allow such a thing as a witty picture, you must admit that it is intended only for persons of intelligence; it can possess an attraction for none but those conversant with the occurrences of the day: why, then, should we object to a commentator who enables us to understand the nature of the intellectual amusement prepared for us?

Arbon. — I have no objection to explanations of pictures which fail to explain themselves. But they should be short and to the point. Wit is for the well-informed, they alone can understand a witty work; and the productions of bygone times and foreign lands are completely lost upon us. It is all well enough with the aid of such notes as we find appended to Rabelais and Hudibras, but what should we say of an author who should find it necessary to write one witty work to elucidate another? Wit, even when

fresh from its fountain, is oftentimes feeble enough: it will scarcely become stronger by passing through two or three hands.

Sinclair. — How I wish, that, instead of thus arguing, we could assist our friend, the owner of these pictures, who would be glad to hear the opinions that have been expressed.

Armidoro. — (Coming from the cabinet.) I perceive that the company is still engaged with these much-censured pictures: had they produced a pleasant impression, they would doubtless have been laid aside long ago.

Amelia. — I propose that that be their fate now: the owner must be required to make no use of them. What! a dozen and more hateful, objectionable pictures to appear in a Ladies' Almanac! Can the man be blind to his own interest? He will ruin his speculation. What lover will present a copy to his mistress, what husband to his wife, what father to his daughter, when the first glance will display such a libel upon the sex?

Armidoro. — I have a proposal to make. These objectionable pictures are not the first of the kind which have appeared in the best almanacs. Our celebrated Chodoviecki has, in his collection of monthly engravings, already represented scenes, not only untrue to nature, but low, and devoid of all pretensions to taste; but how did he do it? Opposite the pictures I allude to, he delineated others of a most charming character, — scenes in perfect harmony with nature, the result of a high education, of long study, and of an innate taste for the Good and Beautiful. Let us go a step beyond the editor of the proposed almanac, and act in opposition to his project. If the intelligent artist has chosen to portray the dark side of his subject, let our author or authoress, if I may dare to express my view, choose the bright side to exercise

her talents, and so form a complete work. I shall not longer delay, Eulalia, to unite my own wishes to this proposal. Undertake a description of good female characters. Create the opposite to these engravings, and employ the charm of your pen, not to elucidate these pictures, but to annihilate them.

Sinclair. — Do, Eulalia. Render us that favour: make haste and promise!

Eulalia. — Authors are ever apt to promise too easily, because they hope for ability to execute their wishes; but experience has rendered me cautious. And even if I could foresee the necessary leisure, within so short a space of time, I should yet hesitate to undertake the arduous duty. The praises of our sex should be spoken by a man, — a young, ardent, loving man. A degree of enthusiasm is requisite for the task, and who has enthusiasm for one's own sex?

Armidoro. — I should prefer intelligence, justice, and delicacy of taste.

Sinclair. — And who can discourse better on the character of good women than the authoress from whose fairy-tale of yesterday we all derived such pleasure and so much incomparable instruction?

Eulalia. — The fairy-tale was not mine.

Sinclair. — Not yours?

Armidoro. — To that I can bear witness.

Sinclair. — But still it was a lady's?

Eulalia. — The production of a friend.

Sinclair. —Then, there are two Eulalias.

Eulalia. — Many, perhaps; and better than —

Armidoro. — Will you relate to the company what you so lately confided to me? You will all hear with astonishment how this delightful production originated.

Eulalia. — A young lady, with whose great excellence I became accidentally acquainted upon a journey, found herself once in a situation of extreme perplexity, the circumstances of which it would be

tedious to narrate. A gentleman to whom she was under many obligations, and who finally offered her his hand, having won her entire esteem and confidence, in a moment of weakness obtained from her the privileges of a husband before their vows of love had been cemented by marriage. Some peculiar circumstances compelled him to travel; and, in the retirement of a country residence, she anticipated with fear and apprehension the moment when she should become a mother. She used to write to me daily, and informed me of every circumstance that happened. But there was shortly nothing more to fear — she now needed only patience; and I observed, from the tone of her letters, that she began to reflect with a disturbed mind upon all that had already occurred, and upon what was yet to take place in her regard. I determined, therefore, to address her in an earnest tone, on the duty she owed no less to herself than to her infant, whose support, particularly at the commencement of its existence, depended so much upon her mind being free from anxiety. I sought to console and to cheer her, and happened to send her several volumes of fairy-tales she had wished to read. Her own desire to escape from the burden of her melancholy thoughts, and the arrival of these books, formed a remarkable coincidence. She could not help reflecting frequently upon her peculiar fate; and she therefore adopted the expedient of clothing all her past sorrowful adventures, as well as her painful apprehensions for the future, in a garb of romance. The events of her past life, — her attachment, her passion, her errors, and her sweet maternal cares, — no less than her present sad condition, were all embodied by her imagination in forms vivid, though impalpable, and passed before her mind in a varied succession of strange and unearthly fancies. Pen in hand, she spent many a day and night noting down her reflections.

Amelia. — In which occupation she must have found it difficult to hold her inkstand.

Eulalia. — Thus did I acquire the rare collection of letters which I now possess. They are all picturesque, strange, and romantic. I never received from her an account of anything actual, so that I sometimes trembled for her reason. Her own situation, the birth of her infant, her sweet affection for her offspring, her joys, her hopes, and her maternal fears, were all treated as events of another world, from which she only expected to be liberated by the arrival of her husband. On her nuptial day she concluded the fairy-tale which you heard recited yesterday, almost in her own words, and which derives its chief interest from the unusual circumstances under which it was composed.

The company could not sufficiently express their astonishment at this statement; and Seyton, who had abandoned his place at the gaming-table to another person, now entered the apartment, and made inquiries concerning the subject of conversation. He was briefly informed that it related to a fairy-tale, which, partly founded on facts, had been composed by the fantastic imagination of a mind not altogether sound.

"It is a great pity," he remarked, "that private diaries are so completely out of fashion. Twenty years ago they were in general use, and many persons thought they possessed a veritable treasure in the record of their daily thoughts. I recollect a very worthy lady upon whom this custom entailed a sad misfortune. A certain governess had been accustomed from her earliest youth to keep a regular diary; and, in fact, she considered its composition to form an indispensable part of her daily duties. She continued the habit when she grew up, and did not lay it aside even when she married. Her memorandums were not looked upon by her as absolute secrets, she had no occasion for such mystery; and she frequently read passages from

it for the amusement of her friends and of her husband. But the book in its entirety was entrusted to nobody. The account of her husband's attachment had been entered in her diary with the same minuteness with which she had formerly noted down the ordinary occurrences of the day; and the entire history of her own affectionate feelings had been described from their first opening hour until they had ripened into a passion, and at length become a rooted habit. Upon one occasion this diary accidentally fell in her husband's way, and the perusal afforded him a strange entertainment. He had undesignedly approached the writing-desk upon which the book lay, and, without suspicion or intention, had read through an entire page which was open before him. He took the opportunity of referring to a few previous and subsequent passages, and then retired with the comfortable assurance that it was high time to discontinue the disagreeable amusement."

Henrietta. — But, according to the wish of my friend, our conversation should be confined to good women; and already we are turning to those who can scarcely be counted among the best.

Seyton. — Why this constant reference to bad and good? Should we not be quite as well contented with others as with ourselves, either as we have been formed by nature, or improved by education?

Armidoro. — I think it would be at once pleasant and useful to arrange and collect a series of anecdotes such as we have heard narrated, and many of which are founded on real occurrences. Light and delicate traits which mark the characters of men are well worthy of our attention, even though they give birth to no extraordinary adventures. They are useless to writers of romance, being devoid of all exciting interest; and worthless to the tribe of anecdote-collectors, for they are for the most part destitute of wit and spirit; but

they would always prove entertaining to a reader who, in a mood of quiet contemplation, should wish to study the general characteristics of mankind.

Sinclair. — Well said. And, if we had only thought of so praiseworthy a work a little earlier, we might have assisted our friend, the editor of the "Ladies' Calendar," by composing a dozen anecdotes, if not of model women, at least of well-behaved personages, to balance his catalogue of naughty ladies.

Amelia. — I should be particularly pleased with a collection of incidents to show how a woman forms the very soul and existence of a household; and this because the artist has introduced a sketch of a spendthrift and improvident wife, to the defamation of our sex.

Seyton. — I can furnish Amelia with a case precisely in point.

Amelia. — Let us hear it. But do not imitate the usual custom of men who undertake to defend the ladies: they frequently begin with praise, and end with censure.

Seyton. — Upon this occasion, however, I do not fear the perversion of my intention, through the influence of any evil spirit. A young man once became tenant of a large hotel which was established in a good situation. Amongst the qualities which recommend a host, he possessed a more than ordinary share of good temper; and, as he had from his youth been a friend to the ale-house, he was peculiarly fortunate in selecting a pursuit in which he found it necessary to devote a considerable portion of the day to his home duties. He was neither careful nor negligent, and his own good temper exercised a perceptible influence over the numerous guests who assembled around him.

He had married a young person who was of a quiet, pleasing disposition. She paid punctual attention to

her business, was attached to her household pursuits, and loved her husband; though she often found fault with him in secret for his carelessness in money matters. She had, as it were, a great reverence for ready money: she thoroughly comprehended its value, and understood the advantage of securing a provision for herself. Devoid of all activity of disposition, she had every tendency to avarice. But a small share of avarice becomes a woman, however ill extravagance may suit her. Generosity is a manly virtue, but parsimony is becoming in a woman. This is the rule of nature, and our judgments must be subservient thereto.

Margaret (for such was the name of this prudent personage) was very much dissatisfied with her husband's carelessness. Upon occasions when large payments were made to him by his customers, it was his habit to leave the money lying for a considerable time upon the table, and then to collect it in a basket, from which he afterward paid it away, without making it up into packages, and without keeping any account of its application. His wife plainly perceived, that even without actual extravagance, where there was such a total want of system, considerable sums must be wasted. She was above all things anxious to make her husband change his negligent habits, and became grieved to observe that the small savings she collected and so carefully retained were as nothing in comparison with the money that was squandered, and determined, therefore, to adopt a rather dangerous expedient to make her husband open his eyes. She resolved to defraud him of as much money as possible, and for this purpose had recourse to an extraordinary plan. She had observed, that, when he had once counted his money which he allowed to remain so long upon the table, he never reckoned it over a second time before putting it away: she therefore rubbed the bottom of a candlestick with tallow, and then, apparently without design,

placed it near the spot where the ducats lay exposed, a species of coin for which she entertained a warm partiality. She thus gained possession of a few pieces, and subsequently of some other coins, and was soon sufficiently well satisfied with her success. She therefore repeated the operation frequently, and entertained no scruple about employing such evil means to effect so praiseworthy an object, and tranquillised her conscience by the reflection that such a mode of abstracting her husband's money could not be termed robbery, as her hands were not employed for the purpose. Her secret treasure increased gradually, and soon became very much greater by the addition of the ready money she herself received from the customers of the hotel, and of which she invariably retained possession.

She had carried on this practice for a whole year, and, though she carefully watched her husband, never had reason to believe that his suspicions were awakened, until at length he began to grow discontented and unhappy. She induced him to tell her the cause of his anxiety, and learned that he was grievously perplexed. After the last payment he had made of a considerable sum of money, he had laid aside his rent; and not only this had disappeared, but he was unable to meet the demand of his landlord from any other channel: and as he had always been accustomed to keep his accounts in his head, and to write down nothing, he could not understand the cause of the deficiency.

Margaret reminded him of his great carelessness, censured his thoughtless manner of receiving and paying away money, and spoke of his general imprudence. Even his generous disposition did not escape her remarks; and, in truth, he had no excuse to offer for a course of conduct, the consequences of which he had so much reason to regret.

But she could not leave her husband long in this

state of grievous trouble, more especially as she felt a pride in being able to render him happy once more. Accordingly, to his great astonishment, on his birthday, which she was always accustomed to celebrate by presenting him with something useful, she entered his private apartment with a basket filled with rouleaux of money. The different descriptions of coin were packed together separately, and the contents carefully indorsed in a handwriting by no means of the best. It would be difficult to describe his astonishment at finding before him the precise sums he had missed, or at his wife's assurance that they belonged to him. She thereupon circumstantially described the time and the manner of her abstracting them, confessed the amount which she had taken, and told also how much she had saved by her own careful attention. His despair was now changed into joy; and the result was, that he abandoned to his wife all the duty of receiving and paying away money for the future. His business was carried on even more prosperously than before; although, from the day of which we have spoken, not a farthing ever passed through his hands. His wife discharged the duty of banker with extraordinary credit to herself; no false money was ever taken; and the establishment of her complete authority in the house was the natural and just consequence of her activity and care; and, after the lapse of ten years, she and her husband were in a condition to purchase the hotel for themselves.

Sinclair. — And so all this truth, love, and fidelity ended in the wife becoming the veritable mistress. I should like to know how far the opinion is just that women have a tendency to acquire authority.

Amelia. — There it is again. Censure, you observe, is sure to follow in the wake of praise.

Armidoro. — Favour us with your sentiments on this subject, good Eulalia. I think I have observed in

your writings no disposition to defend your sex against this imputation.

Eulalia. — In as far as it is an imputation, I should wish it were removed by the conduct of our sex. But, where we have a right to authority, we can need no excuse. We like authority, because we are human. For what else is authority, in the sense in which we use it, than a desire for independence, and the enjoyment of existence as much as possible? This is a privilege all men seek with determination; but our ambition appears, perhaps, more objectionable, because nature, usage, and social regulations place restraints upon our sex, whilst they enlarge the authority of men. What men possess naturally, we have to acquire; and property obtained by a laborious struggle will always be more obstinately held than that which is inherited.

Seyton. — But women, as I think, have no reason to complain on that score. As the world goes, they inherit as much as men, if not more; and in my opinion it is a much more difficult task to become a perfect man than a perfect woman. The phrase, "He shall be thy master," is a formula characteristic of a barbarous age long since passed away. Men cannot claim a right to become educated and refined, without conceding the same privilege to women. As long as the process continues, the balance is even between them; but, as women are more capable of improvement than men, experience shows that the scale soon turns in their favour.

Armidoro. — There is no doubt, that, in all civilised nations, women in general are superior to men; for, where the two sexes exert a mutual influence on each other, a man cannot but become more womanly, and that is a disadvantage; but, when a woman takes after a man, she is a gainer; for, if she can improve her own peculiar qualities by the addition of masculine energy, she becomes an almost perfect being.

Seyton. — I have never considered the subject so deeply. But I think it is generally admitted that women do rule, and must continue to do so; and therefore, whenever I become acquainted with a young lady, I always inquire upon what subjects she exercises her authority; since it must be exercised somewhere.

Amelia. — And thus you establish the point with which you started?

Seyton. — And why not? Is not my reasoning as good as that of philosophers in general, who are convinced by their experience? Active women, who are given to habits of acquisition and saving, are invariably mistresses at home; pretty women, at once graceful and superficial, rule in large societies; whilst those who possess more sound accomplishments exert their influence in smaller circles.

Amelia. — And thus we are divided into three classes.

Sinclair. — All honourable, in my opinion; and yet those three classes do not include the whole sex. There is still a fourth, to which perhaps we had better not allude, that we may escape the charge of converting our praise into censure.

Henrietta. — Then, we must guess the fourth class. Let us see.

Sinclair. — Well, then, the first three classes were those whose activity was displayed at home, in large societies, or in smaller circles.

Henrietta. — What other sphere can there be where we can exercise our activity?

Sinclair. — There may be many. But I am thinking of the reverse of activity.

Henrietta. — Indolence! How could an indolent woman rule?

Sinclair. — Why not?

Henrietta. — In what manner?

Sinclair. — By opposition. Whoever adopts such a course, either from character or principle, acquires more authority than one would readily think.

Amelia. — I fear we are about to fall into the tone of censure so general to men.

Henrietta. — Do not interrupt him, Amelia. Nothing can be more harmless than these mere opinions; and we are the gainers, by learning what other persons think of us. Now, then, for the fourth class: what about it?

Sinclair. — I think I may speak unreservedly. The class I allude to does not exist in our country, and does not exist in France; because the fair sex, both among us and our gallant neighbours, enjoys a proper degree of freedom. But in countries where women are under restraint, and debarred from sharing in public amusements, the class I speak of is numerous. In a neighbouring country, there is a peculiar name by which ladies of this class are invariably designated.

Henrietta. — You must tell us the name: we can never guess names.

Sinclair. — Well, I must tell you, they are called roguish.

Henrietta. — A strange appellation.

Sinclair. — Some time ago you took great interest in reading the speculations of Lavater upon physiognomy: do you remember nothing about roguish countenances in his book?

Henrietta. — It is possible, but it made no impression upon me. I may, perhaps, have construed the word in its ordinary sense, and read on without noticing it.

Sinclair. — It is true that the word "roguish," in its ordinary sense, is usually applied to a person, who, with malicious levity, turns another into ridicule; but, in its present sense, it is meant to describe a young lady, who, by her indifference, coldness, and reserve — qualities which attach to her as a disease — destroys the happi-

ness of one upon whom she is dependent. We meet with examples of this everywhere, sometimes even in our own circle. For instance, when I have praised a lady for her beauty, I have heard it said in reply, "Yes; but she is a bit of a rogue." I even remember a physician saying to a lady, who complained of the anxiety she suffered about her maid servant, "She is a rogue, and will give a deal of trouble."

Amelia rose from her seat, and left the apartment.

Henrietta. — That seems rather strange.

Sinclair. — I thought so too: and I therefore took a note of the symptoms, which seemed to mark a disease half moral and half physical, and framed an essay which I entitled, "Chapter on Rogues;" and, as I meant it to form a portion of a work on general anthropological observations, I have kept it by me hitherto.

Henrietta. — But you must let us see it; and, if you know any interesting anecdotes to elucidate your meaning of the word "rogue," they must find a place in our intended collection of novels.

Sinclair. — This may be all very well, but I find I have failed in the object which brought me hither. I was anxious to find some one in this gifted assembly to undertake an explanatian of these engravings, to recommend some talented writer for the purpose; in place of which, the engravings are abused and pronounced worthless, and I must take my leave without having attained my purpose. But, if I had only made notes of our conversation and anecdotes this evening, I should almost possess an equivalent.

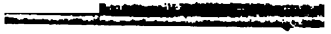
Armidoro. — (Coming from the cabinet, to which he had frequently retired.) Your wish is accomplished. I know the motive of our friend, the editor of the work. I have taken down the heads of our conversation upon this paper. I will arrange the draught; and, if Eulalia will kindly promise to impart to the whole that spirit of charming animation which she possesses,

the graceful tone of the work, and perhaps also its contents, will in some measure expiate the offence of the artist for his ungallant attack.

Henrietta. — I cannot blame your officious friendship, Armidoro: but I wish you had not taken notes of our conversation; it is setting a bad example. Our intercourse has been quite free and unrestrained; and nothing can be worse than that our unguarded conversation should be overheard and written down, perhaps even printed for the amusement of the public.

But Henrietta's scruples were silenced by a promise that nothing should meet the public eye except the little anecdotes which had been related.

Eulalia, however, could not be persuaded to edit the notes of the shorthand writer. She had no wish to withdraw her attention from the fairy-tale with which she was then occupied. The notes remained in possession of the gentlemen of the party, who, with the aid of their own memories, generously afforded their assistance, that they might thereby contribute to the general edification of all "good women."



A Tale

A Tale

THE thick fog of an early autumnal morning obscured the extensive courts which surrounded the prince's castle; but through the mists, which gradually dispersed, a stranger might observe a cavalcade of huntsmen, consisting of horse and foot, already engaged in their early preparations for the field. The active employments of the domestics were already discernible. These latter were engaged in lengthening and shortening stirrup-leathers, preparing the rifles and ammunition, and arranging the game-bags; whilst the dogs, impatient of restraint, threatened to break away from the slips by which they were held. Then the horses became restive, from their own high mettle, or excited by the spur of the rider, who could not resist the temptation to make a vain display of his prowess, even in the obscurity by which he was surrounded. The cavalcade awaited the arrival of the prince, who was delayed too long while taking leave of his young wife.

Lately married, they thoroughly appreciated the happiness of their own congenial dispositions: both were lively and animated, and each shared with delight the pleasures and pursuits of the other. The prince's father had lived long enough to enjoy that period of life when one learns that all the members of a state should spend their time in diligent employ-

ments, and that every one should engage in some energetic occupation corresponding with his taste, and should by this means first acquire, and then enjoy, the fruits of his labour.

How far these maxims had proved successful might have been observed on this very day; for it was the anniversary of the great market in the town, a festival which might indeed be considered a species of fair. The prince had, on the previous day, conducted his wife on horseback through the busy scene, and had caused her to observe what a convenient exchange was carried on between the productions of the mountainous districts and those of the plain; and he took occasion then and there to direct her attention to the industrious character of his subjects.

But whilst the prince was entertaining himself and his courtiers almost exclusively with subjects of this nature, and was perpetually employed with his finance minister, his chief huntsman did not lose sight of his duty: and, upon his representation, it was impossible, during these favourable autumnal days, any longer to postpone the amusement of the chase; as the promised meeting had already been several times deferred, not only to his own mortification, but to that of many strangers who had arrived to take part in the sport.

The princess remained, reluctantly, at home. It had been determined to hunt over the distant mountains, and to disturb the peaceful inhabitants of the forests in those districts by an unexpected declaration of hostilities.

Upon taking his departure, the prince recommended his wife to seek amusement in equestrian exercise, under the conduct of her uncle Frederick. "And I commend you, moreover," he said, "to the care of our trusty Honorio, who will act as your esquire, and pay you every attention;" and saying this as he descended the stairs, and gave the needful instructions to a

comely youth, the prince quickly disappeared amid the crowd of assembled guests and followers.

The princess, who had continued waving her handkerchief to her husband as long as he remained in the courtyard, now retired to an apartment at the back of the castle, which showed an extensive prospect over the mountain; as the castle itself was situated on the brow of the hill, from which a view at once distant and varied opened in all directions. She found the telescope in the spot where it had been left on the previous evening, when they had amused themselves in surveying the landscape, and the extent of mountain and forest amid which the lofty ruins of their ancestral castle were situated. It was a noble relic of ancient times, and shone out gloriously in the evening illumination. A grand but somewhat inadequate idea of its importance was conveyed by the large masses of light and shadow which now fell on it. Moreover, by the aid of the telescope, the autumnal foliage was seen to lend an indescribable charm to the prospect, as it waved upon trees which had grown up amid the ruins, undisturbed, for a great many years. But the princess soon turned the telescope in the direction of a dry and sandy plain beneath her, across which the hunting cavalcade was expected to bend its course. She patiently surveyed the spot, and was at length rewarded, as the clear magnifying power of the instrument enabled her delighted eyes to recognise the prince and his chief equerry. Upon this she once more waved her handkerchief as she observed, or, rather, fancied she observed, a momentary pause in the advance of the procession.

Her uncle Frederick was now announced; and he entered the apartment, accompanied by an artist, bearing a large portfolio under his arm.

"Dear cousin," observed the vigorous old man, addressing her, "we have brought some sketches of the

ancestral castle for your inspection, to show how the old walls and battlements were calculated to afford defence and protection during stormy seasons in years long passed; though they have tottered in some places, and in others have covered the plain with their ruins. Our efforts have been unceasing to render the place accessible, since few spots offer more beauty or sublimity to the eye of the astonished traveller."

The prince continued, as he opened the portfolio containing the different views, "Here, as you ascend the hollow way, through the outer fortifications, you meet the principal tower; and a rock forbids all farther progress. It is the firmest of the mountain range. A castle has been erected upon it, so constructed that it is difficult to say where the work of nature ceases and that of art begins. At a little distance side walls and buttresses have been raised, the whole forming a sort of terrace. The height is surrounded by a wood. For upwards of a century and a half no sound of an axe has been heard within these precincts, and giant trunks of trees appear on all sides. Close to the very walls spring the glossy maple, the rough oak, and the tall pine. They oppose our progress with their boughs and roots, and compel us to make a circuit to secure our advance. See how admirably our artist has sketched all this upon paper; how accurately he has represented the trees as they become entwined amid the masonry of the castle, and thrust their boughs through the opening in the walls. It is a solitude which possesses the indescribable charm of displaying the traces of human power, long since passed away, contending with perpetual and still reviving nature."

Opening a second picture, he continued his discourse. "What say you to this representation of the castle court, which has been rendered impassable for countless years by the falling of the principal tower? We

endeavoured to approach it from the side, and, in order to form a convenient private road, were compelled to blow up the old walls and vaults with gunpowder. But there was no necessity for similar operations within the castle walls. Here is a flat, rocky surface which has been levelled by the hand of nature, through which, however, mighty trees have here and there been able to strike their roots. They have thriven well, and thrust their branches into the very galleries where the knights of old were wont to exercise, and have forced their way through doors and windows into vaulted halls, from which they are not likely now to be expelled, and whence we, at least, shall not remove them. They have become lords of the territory, and may remain so. Concealed beneath heaps of dried leaves, we found a perfectly level floor, which probably cannot be equalled in the world.

"In ascending the steps which lead to the chief tower, it is remarkable to observe, in addition to all we have mentioned above, how a maple-tree has taken root on high, and grown to a great size; so that, in ascending to the highest turret to enjoy the prospect, it is difficult to pass. And here you may refresh yourself beneath the shade; for, even at this elevation, the tree of which we speak throws its shadows over all around.

"We feel much indebted to the talented artist, who, in the course of several views, has brought thus the whole scenery as completely before us as if we had actually witnessed the original scene. He selected the most beautiful hours of the day, and the most favourable season of the year, for his task, to which he devoted many weeks. A small dwelling was erected for him and his assistant in the corner of the castle: you can scarcely imagine what a splendid view of the country, court, and ruins he there enjoyed. We intend these pictures to adorn our country-house;

and every one who enjoys a view of our regular parterres, of our bowers and shady walks, will doubtless feel anxious to feed his imagination and his eyes with an actual inspection of these scenes, and so enjoy at once the old and new, the rigid and the unyielding, the indestructible and the young, the pliant and the irresistible."

Honorio now entered, and announced the arrival of the horses. The princess, thereupon, addressing her uncle, expressed a wish to ride up to the ruins, and examine personally the subjects he had so graphically described. "Ever since my arrival here," she said, "this excursion has been intended; and I shall be delighted to accomplish what has been declared almost impracticable, and what the pictures show to be so difficult."

"Not yet, my dear," replied the prince; "these pictures only portray what the place will become, but many difficulties impede a commencement of the work."

"But let us ride a little toward the mountain," she rejoined, "if only to the beginning of the ascent: I have a great desire to-day to enjoy an extensive prospect."

"Your desire shall be gratified," answered the prince.

"But we will first direct our course through the town," continued the lady, "and across the market-place, where a countless number of booths wear the appearance of a small town or of an encampment. It seems as if all the wants and occupations of every family in the country were brought together and supplied in this one spot; for the attentive observer may here behold whatever man can produce or require. You would suppose that money was wholly unnecessary, and that business of every kind could be carried on by means of barter; and such, in fact, is the case.

Since the prince directed my attention to this view yesterday, I have felt pleasure in observing the manner in which the inhabitants of the mountain and of the valley mutually comprehend each other, and how both so plainly speak their wants and their wishes in this place. The mountaineer, for example, has cut the timber of his forests into a thousand forms, and applied his iron to multifarious uses; while the inhabitant of the valley meets him with his various wares and merchandise, the very materials and object of which it is difficult to know or conjecture."

"I am aware," observed the prince, "that my nephew devotes his attention wholly to these subjects, for at this particular season of the year he receives more than he expends; and this, after all, is the object and end of every national financier, and, indeed, of the pettiest household economist. But excuse me, my dear, I never ride with any pleasure through the market or the fair; obstacles impede one at every step: and my imagination continually recurs to that dreadful calamity which happened before my own eyes, when I witnessed the conflagration of as large a collection of merchandise as is accumulated here. I had scarcely —"

"Let us not lose our time," said the princess, interrupting him, as her worthy uncle had more than once tortured her with a literal account of the very same misfortune. It had happened when he was upon a journey, and had retired, fatigued, to bed, in the best hotel of the town, which was situated in the market-place. It was the season of the fair, and in the dead of the night he was awoke by screams and by the columns of fire which approached the hotel.

The princess hastened to mount her favourite palfrey, and led the way for her unwilling companion, when she rode through the front gate down the hill, in place of passing through the back gate up the mountain.

But who could have felt unwilling to ride at her side, or to follow wherever she led? And even Honorio had gladly abandoned the pleasure of his favourite amusement, the chase, in order to officiate as her devoted attendant.

As we have before observed, they could only ride through the market step by step; but the amusing observations of the princess rendered every pause delightful. "I must repeat my lesson of yesterday," she remarked, "for necessity will try our patience." And, in truth, the crowd pressed upon them in such a manner that they could only continue their progress at a very slow pace. The people testified great joy at beholding the young princess, and the complete satisfaction of many a smiling face evinced the pleasure of the people at finding that the first lady in the land was at once the most lovely and the most gracious.

Promiscuously mingled together were rude mountaineers who inhabited quiet cottages amongst bleak rocks and towering pine-trees, lowlanders from the plains and meadows, and manufacturers from the neighbouring small towns. After quietly surveying the motley crowd, the princess remarked to her companion, that all the people she saw seemed to take delight in using more stuff for their garments than was necessary, whether it consisted of cloth, linen, ribbon, or trimming. It seemed as if the wearers, both men and women, thought they would be better if they looked puffed out as much as possible.

"We must leave that matter to themselves," answered the uncle. "Every man must dispose of his superfluity as he pleases: well for those who spend it in mere ornament."

The princess nodded her assent.

They had now arrived at a wide, open square which led to one of the suburbs: they there perceived a number of small booths and stalls, and also a large

wooden building whence a most discordant howling issued. It was the feeding-hour of the wild animals which were there enclosed for exhibition. The lion roared with that fearful voice with which he was accustomed to terrify both woods and wastes. The horses trembled, and no one could avoid observing how the monarch of the desert made himself terrible in the tranquil circles of civilised life. Approaching nearer, they remarked the tawdry, colossal pictures on which the beasts were painted in the brightest colours, intended to afford irresistible temptation to the busy citizen. The grim and fearful tiger was in the act of springing upon a negro to tear him to pieces. The lion stood in solemn majesty, as if he saw no worthy prey before him. Other wonderful creatures in the same group presented inferior attractions.

"Upon our return," said the princess, "we will alight, and take a nearer inspection of these rare creatures."

"Is it not extraordinary," replied the prince, "that man takes pleasure in fearful excitements? The tiger, for instance, is lying quietly enough within his cage; and yet here the brute must be painted in the act of springing fiercely on a negro, in order that the public may believe that the same scene is to be witnessed within. Do not murder and death, fire and desolation, sufficiently abound, but that every mountebank must repeat such horrors? The worthy people like to be alarmed, that they may afterward enjoy the delightful sensation of freedom and security."

But whatever feelings of terror such frightful representations might have inspired, they disappeared when they reached the gate and surveyed the cheerful prospects around. The road led down to a river, a narrow brook in truth, and only calculated to bear light skiffs, but destined afterward, when swelled into a wider stream, to take another name, and to water distant

lands. They then bent their course farther through carefully cultivated fruit and pleasure gardens, in an orderly and populous neighbourhood, until first a copse and then a wood received them as guests, and delighted their eyes with a limited but charming landscape. A green valley leading to the heights above, which had been lately mowed for the second time, and wore the appearance of velvet, having been copiously watered by a rich stream, now received them with a friendly welcome. They then bent their course to a higher and more open spot, which, upon issuing from the wood, they reached after a short ascent, and whence they obtained a distant view of the old castle, the object of their pilgrimage, which shone above the groups of trees, and assumed the appearance of a well-wooded rock. Behind them (for no one ever attained this height without turning to look round) they saw, through occasional openings in the lofty trees, the prince's castle on the left, illuminated by the morning sun; the higher portion of the town, obscured by a light, cloudy mist; and, on the right hand, the lower part, through which the river flowed in many windings, with its meadows and its mills; whilst straight before them the country extended in a wide, productive plain.

After they had satisfied their eyes with the landscape, or rather, as is often the case in surveying an extensive view from an eminence, when they had become desirous of a wider and less circumscribed prospect, they rode slowly along a broad and stony plain, where they saw the mighty ruin standing with its coronet of green, whilst its base was clad with trees of lesser height; and proceeding onward they encountered the steepest and most impassable side of the ascent. It was defended by enormous rocks, which had endured for ages: proof against the ravages of time, they were fast rooted in the earth, and towered aloft. One part of the castle had fallen, and lay in huge fragments irregularly

massed, and seemed to act as an insurmountable barrier, the mere attempt to overcome which is a delight to youth: as supple limbs ever find it a pleasure to undertake, to combat, and to conquer. The princess seemed disposed to make the attempt; Honorio was at hand; her princely uncle assented, unwilling to acknowledge his want of agility. The horses were directed to wait for them under the trees; and it was intended they should make for a certain point where a large rock had been rendered smooth, and from which a prospect was beheld, which, though of the nature of a bird's-eye view, was sufficiently picturesque.

It was mid-day: the sun had attained its highest altitude, and shed its clearest rays around; the princely castle, in all its parts, battlements, wings, cupolas, and towers, presented a glorious appearance. The upper part of the town was seen in its full extent: the eye could even penetrate into parts of the lower town, and, with the assistance of the telescope, distinguish the market-place, and even the very booths. It was Honorio's invariable custom to sling this indispensable instrument to his side. They took a view of the river in its course and its descent, and of the sloping plain, and of the luxuriant country with its gentle undulations, and then of the numerous villages, for it had been from time immemorial a subject of contention, how many could be counted from this spot.

Over the wide plain there reigned a calm stillness, such as is accustomed to rule at mid-day, — an hour when, according to classical phraseology, the god Pan sleeps, and all nature is breathless, that his repose may be undisturbed.

"It is not the first time," observed the princess, "that, standing upon an eminence which presents a wide-extended view, I have thought how pure and peaceful is the look of holy Nature; and the impression comes upon me, that the world beneath must be free from

strife and care: but returning to the dwellings of man, be they the cottage or the palace, be they roomy or circumscribed, we find that there is, in truth, ever something to subdue, to struggle with, to quiet and allay."

Honorio, in the meantime, had directed the telescope toward the town, and now exclaimed, "Look, look! the town is on fire in the market-place."

They looked, and saw some smoke; but the glare of daylight eclipsed the flames. "The fire increases!" they exclaimed, still looking through the instrument. The princess saw the calamity with the naked eye: from time to time they perceived a red flame ascending amid the smoke. Her uncle at length exclaimed, "Let us return: it is calamitous! I have always feared the recurrence of such a misfortune."

They descended; and, having reached the horses, the princess thus addressed her old relative: "Ride forward, sir, hastily, with your attendant, but leave Honorio with me, and we will follow."

Her uncle perceived the prudence and utility of this advice, and, riding on as quickly as the nature of the ground would allow, descended to the open plain. The princess mounted her steed, upon which Honorio addressed her thus: "I pray your Highness to ride slowly; the fire-engines are in the best order, both in the town and in the castle; there can surely be no mistake or error, even in so unexpected an emergency. Here, however, the way is dangerous, and riding is insecure, from the small stones and the smooth grass; and, in addition, the fire will no doubt be extinguished before we reach the town."

But the princess indulged in no such hope: she saw the smoke ascend, and thought she perceived a flash of lightning and heard a thunder-clap; and her mind was filled with the frightful pictures of the conflagration her uncle's oft-repeated narrative had impressed on her.

That calamity had indeed been dreadful, sudden, and impressive enough to make one apprehensive for the repetition of a like misfortune. At midnight a fearful fire had broken out in the market-place, which was filled with booths and stalls, before the occupants of those temporary habitations had been roused from their profound dreams. The prince himself, after a weary day's journey, had retired to rest, but, rushing to the window, perceived with dismay the flames which raged around on every side, and approached the spot where he stood. The houses of the market-place, crimsoned with the reflection, appeared already to burn, and threatened every instant to burst out into a general conflagration. The fierce element raged irresistibly; the beams and rafters crackled; whilst countless pieces of consumed linen flew aloft, and the burnt and shapeless rags sported in the air and looked like foul demons revelling in their congenial element. With loud cries of distress, each individual endeavoured to rescue what he could from the flames. Servants and assistants vied with their masters in their efforts to save the huge bales of goods already half consumed, to tear what still remained uninjured from the burning stalls, and to pack it away in chests; although they were even then compelled to abandon their labours, and leave the whole to fall a prey to the conflagration. How many wished that the raging blaze would allow but a single moment's respite, and, pausing to consider the possibility of such a mercy, fell victims to their brief hesitation. Many buildings burned on one side, while the other side lay in obscure darkness. A few determined, self-willed characters bent themselves obstinately to the task of saving something from the flames, and suffered for their heroism. The whole scene of misery and devastation was renewed in the mind of the beautiful princess: her countenance was clouded, which had beamed so radiantly in the early morning;

her eyes had lost their lustre; and even the beautiful woods and meadows around now looked sad and mournful.

Riding onward, she entered the sweet valley, but felt uncheered by the refreshing coolness of the place. She had, however, not advanced far, before she observed an unusual appearance in the copse near the meadow where the sparkling brook which flowed through the adjacent country took its rise. She at once recognised a tiger crouched in the attitude to spring, as she had seen him represented in the painting. The impression was fearful. "Flee! gracious lady," cried Honorio, "flee at once!" She turned her horse to mount the steep hill she had just descended: but her young attendant drew his pistol, and, approaching the monster, fired; unfortunately he missed his mark, the tiger leaped aside, the horse started, and the terrified beast pursued his course and followed the princess. The latter urged her horse up the steep, stony acclivity, forgetting for a moment that the pampered animal she rode was unused to such exertions; but, urged by his impetuous rider, the spirited steed made a new effort, till at length, stumbling at an inequality of the ground, after many attempts to recover his footing, he fell exhausted to the ground. The princess released herself from the saddle with great expertness and presence of mind, and brought her horse again to its feet. The tiger was in pursuit at a slow pace. The uneven ground and sharp stones appeared to retard his progress; though, as Honorio approached, his speed and strength seemed to be renewed. They now came nearer to the spot where the princess stood by her horse; and Honorio, bending down, discharged a second pistol. This time he was successful, and shot the monster through the head. The animal fell, and, as he lay stretched upon the ground at full length, gave evidence of that might and terror which was now reduced to a

lifeless form. Honorio had leaped from his horse, and was now kneeling on the body of the huge brute. He had already put an end to his struggles with the hunting-knife which gleamed within his grasp. He looked even more handsome and active than the princess had ever seen him in list or tournament. Thus had he oftentimes driven his bullet through the head of the Turk in the riding-school, piercing his forehead under the turban, and, carried onward by his rapid courser, had oftentimes struck the Moor's head to the ground with his shining sabre. In all such knightly feats he was dexterous and successful, and here he had found an opportunity for putting his skill to the test.

"Despatch him quickly," said the princess, faintly: "I fear he may injure you with his claws."

"There is no danger," answered the youth; "he is dead enough: and I do not wish to spoil his skin, — it shall ornament your sledge next winter."

"Do not jest at such a time," continued the princess: "such a moment calls forth every feeling of devotion that can fill the heart."

"And I never felt more devout than now," added Honorio, "and therefore are my thoughts cheerful: I only consider how this creature's skin may serve your pleasure."

"It would too often remind me of this dreadful moment," she replied.

"And yet," answered the youth, with burning cheek, "this triumph is more innocent than that in which the arms of the defeated are borne in proud procession before the conqueror."

"I shall never forget your courage and skill," rejoined the princess; "and let me add that you may, during your whole life, command the gratitude and favour of the prince. But rise, — the monster is dead: rise, I say; and let us think what next is to be done."

"Since I find myself now kneeling before you," re-

plied Honorio, "let me be assured of a grace, of a favour, which you can bestow upon me. I have oftentimes implored your princely husband for permission to set out upon my travels. He who dares aspire to the good fortune of becoming your guest should have seen the world. Travellers flock hither from all quarters; and when the conversation turns on some town, or on some peculiar part of the globe, your guests are asked if they have never seen the same. No one can expect confidence who has not seen everything. We must instruct ourselves for the benefit of others."

"Rise!" repeated the princess: "I can never consent to desire or request anything contrary to the wish of my husband; but, if I mistake not, the cause of your detention here has already been removed. It was the wish of your prince to mark how your character would ripen, and prove worthy of an independent nobleman, who might one day be to both himself and his sovereign as great an honour abroad, as had hitherto been the case here at court; and I doubt not that your present deed of bravery will prove as good a passport as any youth can carry with him through the world."

The princess had scarcely time to mark, that, instead of an expression of youthful delight, a shade of grief now darkened his countenance; and he could scarcely display his emotion, before a woman approached, climbing the mountain hastily, and leading a boy by the hand. Honorio had just risen from his kneeling posture, and seemed lost in thought, when the woman advanced with piercing cries, and immediately flung herself upon the lifeless body of the tiger. Her conduct, no less than her gaudy and peculiar attire, bore evidence that she was the owner and attendant of the animal. The boy, by whom she was accompanied, was remarkable for his sparkling eyes and jet-black hair. He carried a flute in his hand, and

joined his tears to those of his mother; whilst, with a more calm but deep-felt sorrow than she displayed, he knelt quietly at her side.

The violent expression of this wretched woman's grief was succeeded by a torrent of expostulations, which rushed from her in broken sentences, reminding one of a mountain stream whose course is interrupted by impeding rocks. Her natural expressions, short and abrupt, were forcible and pathetic: vain would be the endeavour to translate them into our idiom; we must be satisfied with their general meaning. "They have murdered thee, poor animal, murdered thee without cause! Tamely thou wouldst have lain down to await our arrival; for thy feet pained thee, and thy claws were powerless. Thou didst lack thy burning native sun to bring thee to maturity. Thou wert the most beautiful animal of thy kind! Whoever beheld a more noble royal tiger stretched out to sleep, than thou art as thou liest here, never to rise again? When in the morning thou awokest at the earliest dawn of day, opening thy wide jaws, and stretching out thy ruddy tongue, thou seemedst to us to smile; and even when a growl burst from thee, still didst thou ever playfully take thy food from the hand of a woman, or from the fingers of a child. Long did we accompany thee in thy travels, and long was thy society to us as indispensable as profitable. To us, in very truth, did food come from the ravenous, and sweet refreshment from the strong. But alas, alas! this can never be again!"

She had not quite ended her lamentations, when a troop of horsemen was observed riding in a body over the heights which led from the castle. They were soon recognised as the hunting cavalcade of the prince, and he himself was at their head. Riding amongst the distant hills, they had observed the dark columns of smoke which obscured the atmosphere; and pushing on over hill and dale, as if in the heat of the chase,

they had followed the course indicated by the smoke, which served them as a guide. Rushing forward, regardless of every obstacle, they had come by surprise upon the astonished group, who presented a remarkable appearance in the opening of the hills. Their mutual recognition produced a general surprise; and, after a short pause, a few words of explanation cleared up the apparent mystery. The prince heard with astonishment the extraordinary occurrence, as he stood surrounded by the crowd of attendants on foot and on horseback. There seemed no doubt about the necessary course. Orders and commands were at once issued by the prince.

A stranger now forced his way forward, and appeared within the circle. He was tall in figure, and attired as gaudily as the woman and her child. The members of the family recognised each other with mutual surprise and pain. But the man, collecting himself, stood at a respectful distance from the prince, and addressed him thus:

"This is not a moment for complaining. My lord and mighty master, the lion has also escaped, and is concealed somewhere here in the mountain; but spare him, I implore you! have mercy upon him, that he may not perish like this poor animal!"

"The lion escaped!" exclaimed the prince. "Have you found his track?"

"Yes, sir. A peasant in the valley, who needlessly took refuge in a tree, pointed to the direction he had taken, — this is the way, to the left; but, perceiving a crowd of men and horses before me, I became curious to know the occasion of their assembling, and hastened forward to obtain help."

"Well," said the prince, "the chase must begin in this direction. Load your rifles, go deliberately to work: no misfortune can happen, if you but drive him into the thick woods below us. But in truth, worthy

man, we can scarcely spare your favourite: why were you negligent enough to let him escape?"

"The fire broke out," replied the other, "and we remained quiet and prepared: it quickly spread round, but raged at a distance from us. We were provided with water in abundance; but suddenly an explosion of gunpowder took place, and the conflagration immediately extended to us and beyond us. We were too precipitate, and are now reduced to ruin."

The prince was still engaged in issuing his orders, and there was general silence for a moment, when a man was observed flying, rather than running, down from the castle. He was quickly recognised as the watchman of the artist's studio, whose business it was to occupy the dwelling and look after the workmen. Breathless he advanced, and a few words served to announce the nature of his business.

"The lion had taken refuge on the heights, and had lain down in the sunshine behind the lofty walls of the castle. He was reposing at the foot of an old tree in perfect tranquillity. But," continued the man in a tone of bitter complaint, "unfortunately, I took my rifle to the town yesterday, to have it repaired, or the animal had never risen again: his skin, at least, would have been mine; and I had worn it in triumph all my life."

The prince, whose military experience had often served him in time of need, — for he had frequently been in situations where unavoidable danger pressed on every side, — observed, in reply to the man, "What pledge can you give, that, if we spare your lion, he will do no mischief in the country?"

"My wife and child," answered the father hastily, "will quiet him and lead him peacefully along, until I repair his shattered cage; and then we shall keep him harmless and uninjured."

The child seemed to be looking for his flute. It was

that species of instrument which is sometimes called the soft, sweet flute, short in the mouthpiece, like a pipe. Those who understood the art of using it could draw from it the most delicious tones.

In the meantime, the prince inquired of the keeper by which path the lion had ascended the mountain.

"Through the low road," replied the latter: "it is walled in on both sides, has long been the only passage, and shall continue so. Two foot-paths originally led to the same point; but we destroyed them, that there might remain but one way to that castle of enchantment and beauty which is to be formed by the taste and talent of Prince Frederick."

After a thoughtful pause, during which the prince stood contemplating the child, who continued playing softly on his flute, the former turned toward Honorio, and said:

"Thou hast this day performed a great deal: finish the task you have begun. Occupy the narrow road of which we have heard; hold your rifle ready, but do not shoot if you think it likely that the lion may be driven back; but, under any circumstances, kindle a fire, that he may be afraid to descend in this direction. The man and his wife must answer for the consequences."

Honorio proceeded without delay to execute the orders he had received.

The child went on with his tune, which was not exactly a melody: but a mere succession of notes followed, without any precise order or artistic arrangement; yet, perhaps for this very reason, the effect seemed replete with enchantment. Every one was delighted with the simple music; when the father, full of a noble enthusiasm, addressed the assembled spectators thus:

"God has bestowed the gift of wisdom upon the prince, and the power of seeing that all divine works

are good, each after its kind. Behold how the rocks stand firm and motionless, proof against the effects of sun and storm. Their summits are crowned with ancient trees; and, elated with the pride of their ornaments, they look round boldly far and wide. But, should a part become detached, it no longer appears as before: it breaks into a thousand pieces, and covers the side of the declivity. But even there the pieces find no resting-place: they pursue their course downward, till the brook receives them, and carries them onward to the river. Thence, unresisting and submissive, their sharp angles having become rounded and smooth, they are borne along with greater velocity from stream to stream, till they finally attain the ocean, in whose mighty depths giants abide and dwarfs abound.

"But who celebrates the praise of the Lord, whom the stars praise from all eternity? Why, however, should we direct our vision so far? Behold the bee, how he makes his provision in harvest-time, and constructs a dwelling, correct in angle and level, at once the architect and workman. Behold the ant: she knows her way, and loses it not; she builds her habitation of grass and earth and tiny twigs, builds it high, and strengthens it with arches, but in vain, — the prancing steed approaches, and treads it into nothing, destroying the little rafters and supports of the edifice. He snorts with impatience and with restlessness; for the Lord has formed the horse as companion to the wind, and brother to the storm, that he may carry mankind whither he will. But in the palm forest even *he* takes to flight. There, in the wilderness, the lion roams in proud majesty: he is monarch of the beasts, and nothing can resist his strength. But man has subdued his valour: the mightiest of animals has respect for the image of God, in which the very angels are formed; and they minister to the Lord and his

servants. Daniel trembled not in the lions' den: he stood full of faith and holy confidence, and the wild roaring of the monsters did not interrupt his pious song."

This address, which was delivered with an expression of natural enthusiasm, was accompanied by the child's sweet music. But, when his father had concluded, the boy commenced to sing with clear and sonorous voice, and some degree of skill. His parent in the meantime seized his flute, and in soft notes accompanied the child as he sung:

"Hear the prophet's song ascending
From the cavern's dark retreat,
Whilst an angel, earthward bending,
Cheers his soul with accents sweet.
Fear and terror come not o'er him,
As the lion's angry brood
Crouch with placid mien before him,
By his holy song subdued."

The father continued to accompany the verses with his flute, whilst the mother's voice was occasionally heard to intervene as second.

The effect of the whole was rendered more peculiar and impressive by the child's frequently inverting the order of the verses. And if he did not, by this artifice, give a new sense and meaning to the whole, he at least highly excited the feelings of his audience:

"Angels o'er us mildly bending
Cheer us with their voices sweet.
Hark! what strains enchant the ear!
In the cavern's dark retreat
Can the prophet quake with fear?
Holy accents, sweetly blending,
Banish ev'ry earthly ill,
Whilst an angel choir, descending,
Executes the heavenly will."

Then all three joined with force and emphasis:

"Since the eternal Eye, far-seeing,
Earth and sea surveys in peace,
Lion shall with lamb agreeing
Live, and angry tempests cease.
Warriors' sword no more shall lower,
Faith and Hope their fruit shall bear:
Wondrous is the mighty power
Of Love, which pours its soul in prayer."

The music ceased. Silence reigned around. Each one listened attentively to the dying tones, and now only one could observe and note the general impression. Every listener was overcome, though each was affected in a different manner. The prince looked sorrowfully at his wife, as though he had only just perceived the danger which had lately threatened him; whilst she, leaning upon his arm, did not hesitate to draw forth her embroidered handkerchief to dry the starting tear. It was delightful to relieve her youthful heart from the weight of grief with which she had for some time felt oppressed. A general silence reigned around; and forgotten were the fears which all had experienced, both from the conflagration below and the appearance of the formidable lion above.

The repose of the whole company was first interrupted by the prince, who made a signal to lead the horses nearer: he then turned to the woman, and addressed her thus: "You think, then, to master the lion wherever you meet him, by the power of your song, assisted by that of the child and the tones of your flute, and believe that you can thus lead him harmless and uninjured to his cage?"

She protested and assured him that she would do so, whereupon a servant was ordered to show her the way to the castle. The prince and a few of his attendants now took their departure hastily; whilst the

princess, accompanied by the rest, followed more slowly after. But the mother and the child, accompanied by the servant, who had armed himself with a rifle, hastened to ascend the mountain.

At the very entrance of the narrow road which led to the castle, they found the hunting attendants busily employed in piling together heaps of dry brushwood, to kindle a large fire.

"There is no necessity for such precaution," observed the woman: "all will yet turn out well."

They perceived Honorio at a little distance from them, sitting upon a fragment of the wall, with his double-barrelled rifle in his lap, prepared as it seemed for every emergency. But he paid little attention to the people who approached: he was absorbed in his own contemplations, and seemed engaged in deepest thought. The woman entreated that he would not permit the fire to be kindled: he, however, paid not the smallest attention to her request. She then raised her voice, and exclaimed, "Thou handsome youth who killed my tiger, I curse thee not; but spare my lion, and I will bless thee!"

But Honorio was looking upon vacancy: his eyes were bent upon the sun, which had finished its daily course, and was now about to set.

"You are looking to the setting sun," cried the woman; "and you are right, for there is yet much to do: but hasten, delay not, and you will conquer. But, first of all, conquer yourself." He seemed to smile at this observation. The woman passed on, but could not avoid looking round to observe him once more. The setting sun had cast a rosy glow upon his countenance; she thought she had never beheld so handsome a youth.

"If your child," said the attendant, "can, as you imagine, with his fluting and his singing, entice and tranquillise the lion, we shall easily succeed in mastering him; for the ferocious animal has lain down to

sleep under the broken arch, through which we have secured a passage into the castle court, as the chief entrance has been long in ruins. Let the child, then, entice him inside, when we can close the gate without difficulty; and the child may, if he please, escape by a small winding staircase, which is situated in one of the corners. We may, in the meantime, conceal ourselves; but I shall take up a position which will enable me to assist the child at any moment with my rifle."

"These preparations are all needless: Heaven, and our own skill, bravery, and good fortune, are our best defence."

"But first let me conduct you by this steep ascent to the top of the tower, right opposite to the entrance of which I have spoken. The child may then descend into the arena, and there he can try to exercise his power over the obedient animal."

This was done. Concealed above, the attendant and the mother surveyed the proceeding. The child descended the narrow staircase, and soon appeared in the wide courtyard. He immediately entered into the narrow opening opposite, when the sweet sounds of his flute were heard; but these gradually diminished, till they finally ceased. The pause was fearful: the solemnity of the proceeding filled the old attendant with apprehension, accustomed as he was to every sort of danger. He declared that he would rather engage the enraged animal himself. But the mother preserved her cheerful countenance, and, leaning over the parapet in a listening attitude, betrayed not the slightest sign of fear.

At length the flute was heard again. The child had issued from the dark recess, his face beaming with triumph: the lion was slowly following, and seemed to walk with difficulty. Now and then the animal appeared disposed to lie down; but the child continued to lead him quietly along, bending his way through

the half-leafless autumn-tinged trees, until he arrived at a spot which was illumined by the last rays of the setting sun. They were shedding their parting glory through the ruins; and in this spot he recommenced his sweet song, which we cannot refrain from repeating:

"Hear the prophet's song ascending
From the cavern's dark retreat,
Whilst an angel, earthward bending,
Cheers his soul with accents sweet.
Fear and terror come not o'er him,
As the lion's angry brood
Crouch with placid mien before him,
By his holy song subdued."

The lion, in the meantime, had lain quietly down, and, raising his heavy paw, had placed it in the lap of the child. The latter stroked it gently, and continued his chant, but soon observed that a sharp thorn had penetrated into the ball of the animal's foot. With great tenderness, the child extracted the thorn, and, taking his bright-coloured silk handkerchief from his neck, bound it round the foot of the huge creature; whilst the attentive mother, still joyfully leaning over the parapet with outstretched arms, would probably, as was her wont, have testified her approbation with loud shouts and clapping of hands, if the attendant had not rudely seized her, and reminded her that the danger was not yet completely over.

The child now joyfully continued his song, after he had hummed a few notes by way of prelude:

"Since the eternal Eye, far-seeing,
Earth and sea surveys in peace,
Lion shall with lamb agreeing
Live, and angry tempests cease.
Warriors' sword no more shall lower,
Faith and Hope their fruit shall bear:
Wondrous is the mighty power
Of Love, which pours its soul in prayer."

If it were possible to conceive that the features of so fierce a monster, at once the tyrant of the forest and the despot of the animal kingdom, could display an expression of pleasure and grateful joy, it might have been witnessed upon this occasion; and, in very truth, the child, in the fulness of his beauty, looked like some victorious conqueror; though it could not be said that the lion seemed subdued, for his mighty power was only for a time concealed. He wore the aspect of a tamed creature, who had been content to make a voluntary surrender of the mighty power with which it was endued. And thus the child continued to play and to sing, transposing his verses or adding to them, as he felt inclined.

"Holy angels, still untiring,
Aid the good and virtuous child,
Every noble deed inspiring,
And restraining actions wild.
So the forest king to render
Tame as child at parent's knee,
Still be gentle, kind, and tender,
Use sweet love and melody."

THE END.

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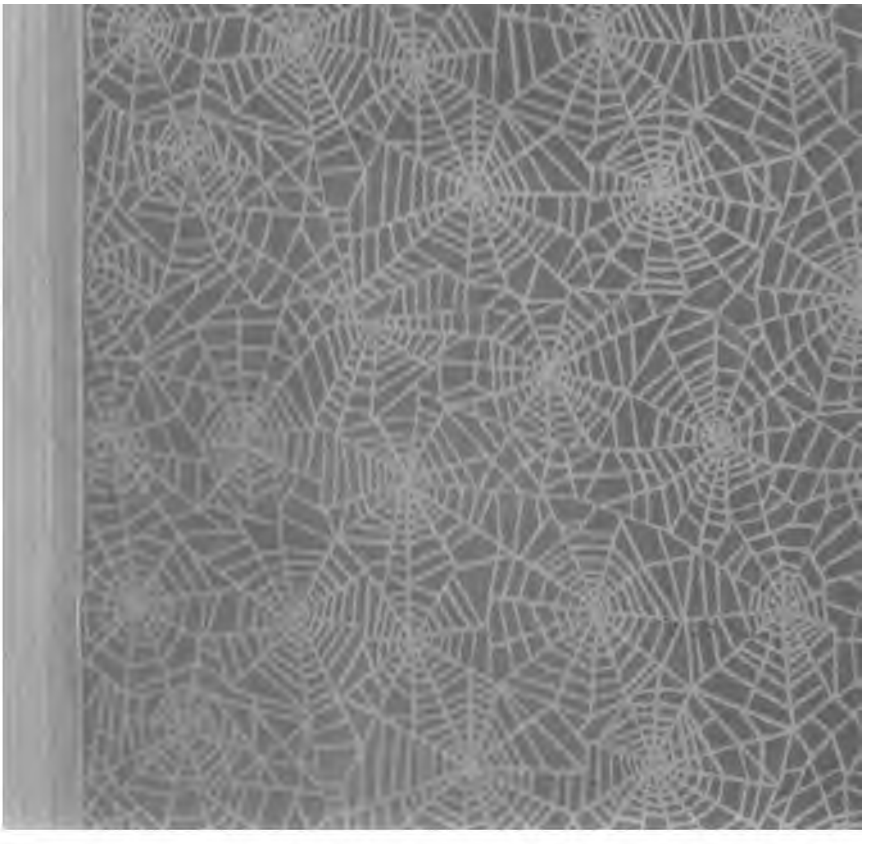

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